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SHANMUKHA MAGAZINE - JANUARY ISSUE

AND

**SHANMUKHANANADA SABHA'S
GOLDEN JUBILEE SOUVENIR**



ISSUE VOL. XXIX

ISSUE NO.: 1

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Editor: Shri P. N. Krishnamoorthy

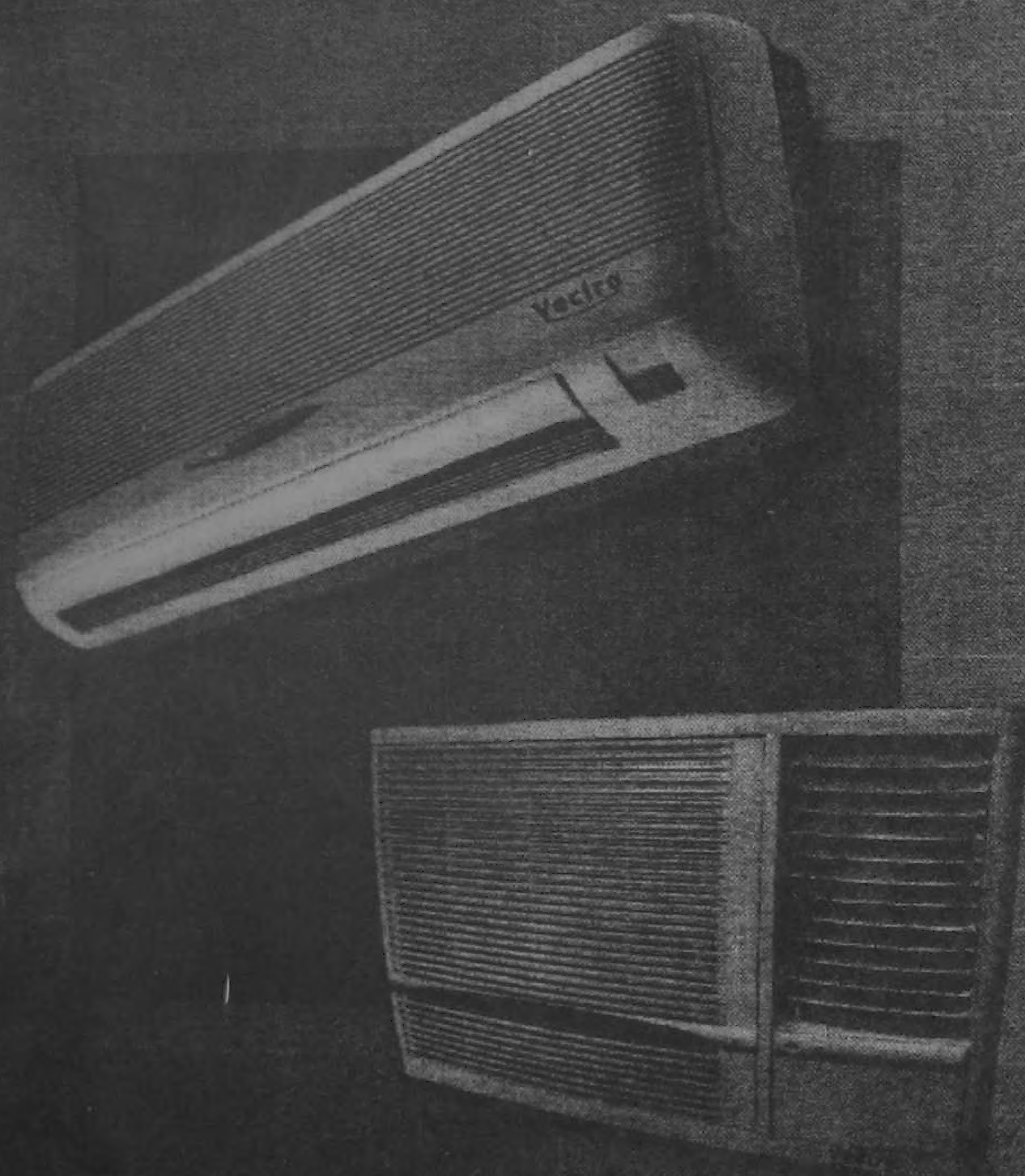
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IN FOCUS

Shanmukha

Amidst the widespread celebrations of the Golden Jubilee Year of the Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha, your new editor of 'Shanmukha' wishes to convey his greetings to readers, contributors, subscribers, advertisers and well-wishers. All of us connected with the Sabha are particularly happy with the 'GURUKUL Award for the Best Institution' that has been conferred on the Sabha by Jaya TV. Our Sabha was chosen, on an All-India basis, as the best institution serving the cause of music, dance, drama and Harikatha. The Sabha further distinguished itself by instituting a National Eminence Award and conferring it on the doyen of Carnatic Music, nonagenarian Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer. The Sabha has also instituted an annual 'Sangeetha Shiromani Award' to be awarded to three emerging artistes in any field of fine arts each year. This year, these awards went to Smt. Shruthi Sadolikar Katkar, Shri Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Shri Niladri Kumar.

The present issue includes a number of articles by distinguished musicians and musicologists. It also contains a very special interview with Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer recorded soon after he received the Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award. We have also published the Presidential Address delivered by the Sikkil Sisters in connection with their being awarded the 'Sangeetha Kalanidhi' title by the Madras Music Academy. The obituaries on Shri T. K. Mahalingam Pillai, the famed Natyacharya and Shri N. Pattabhiraman, Editor - 'Sruti' are our tribute to two very distinguished figures in the fields of dance and music journalism.

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Note from the Publisher

Shri P. N. Krishnamoorthy
The New Hon. Editor "Shanmukha" Magazine,
Director & Principal of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts
& Sangeetha Sabha Mahavidyalaya

And

Shri V. Vamanan
Vice-Principal of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts
& Sangeetha Sabha Mahavidyalaya

Shri P. N. Krishnamoorthy needs no introduction to the world of Music. However, for the sake of good order to the readers of "SHANMUKHA" Magazine, we have pleasure in mirroring his high profile in various systems of Music (Carnatic, Hindustani and Western classical). Basically, he is a Scientist of International repute in the fields of Atomic Energy and Electronics.

A rare combination of Music critic, Musician, Music Teacher and Composer all rolled into one, as he is, he, in a fine gesture, came forward with rare spontaneity to accept the Hon. Editorship of the prestigious Magazine "SHANMUKHA" published by our Sabha. He has also accepted the Hon. Directorship of our Sangeetha Vidyalaya and the Hon. Principalship of "Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Mahavidyalaya" (College of Fine Arts). This institution is affiliated to the University of Mumbai and as a start, a 3-year Degree Course in Carnatic Vocal Music has been started.

The Magazine Committee, is indeed fortunate to have this versatile man of Arts and Science as the Head of the two important wings of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha among other service units and we have no doubt that he

will only enrich the interests of the activities of these two wings at his learned hands.

Shri Krishnamoorthy has taken over these challenging assignments as a labour of love and also in order to fill the void created by yet another person of learning in Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran who had demitted office on health grounds.

We are also happy to announce that **Shri.V. Vamanan**, a well known musician of Mumbai, has taken over as Vice-Principal of the Mahavidyalaya. Having learnt music from a string of distinguished teachers, Shri.Vamanan has emerged as a musician of outstanding merit. He is an 'A' grade Musician of All India Radio and a performer on Doordarshan. He has also established himself as an excellent teacher. He is closely associated with all facets of the publication of 'SHANMUKHA'. His induction into the Mahavidyalaya will prove to be a great asset to the Institution.

We request the readers, the students, the faculty and others to co-operate with these two distinguished persons, to enable them to successfully run the show.

S. Seshadri
Publisher



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Best Institution Award

The Jaya TV's Marghazi Maha Utsavam held in Chennai from the first to the fifteenth of December was of special significance to the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha.

*The Sabha was awarded the **GURUKUL Award for the Best Institution.***

It is a matter of great satisfaction to us that the Shanmukhananda Sabha was chosen, on an All-India basis, as the Best Institution serving the cause of music, dance, drama and harikatha. The award was received, on behalf of the Sabha, by Shri S. Seshadri and Shri Jayaram Mani. His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal presented the award and offered his blessings.

The timing of the award could not have been more appropriate, for Shanmukhananda is now celebrating its Golden Jubilee Year.

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Report on Golden Jubilee Celebrations

Shanmukhananda turned golden this year. The celebrations began from 31st August 2002. A musical extravaganza of the pure tradition and classical marriage of rhythm and motion erupted at the majestic temple of Fine Arts at the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Auditorium.

As we celebrate 50 years of useful service in the cause of Fine Arts, nostalgic memories of the past, the humble beginnings, the sacrifice of the founders and the succeeding office bearers, of the devastating fire in 1990 that reduced to ashes about four decades of sustained efforts and all our dreams, stare before us. Undeterred by this calamity, the process of rebuilding the Auditorium began. The outstanding elements of the entire revival process are the people who did not give in to the fall of fate and strove to build back an edifice more in tune with the changing needs. We salute them for their exemplary devotion to public duty and this celebration was dedicated to them.

Inaugural Function:

The inaugural function was held on Saturday, 31st August 2002. Shri Manohar Joshi, Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha presided over the function. Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Vedprakash Goyal, Union Minister for Shipping, Mr. R. Ganesan, Chief Post Master General, Maharashtra Circle were the guests of honour. The highlights of the inaugural function were:

1. A special cover on the occasion of the inauguration of the Golden Jubilee of the Sabha was released by the Department of Posts and Telegraph, Union Government.
2. 'Shanmukha Kolahalam' a special song penned for the occasion, composed and set to music by Shri P. S. Krishnamoorthy was formally unveiled. The five piece music was garlanded in many ragas with trimmings of Ragamalika.
3. A ten minute documentary on 'Fifty Golden Years in the cause of Fine Arts' produced by Bharatbala productions was released.
4. A commemorative volume - 'A peep into the past' capturing the glory of the Sabha, its moments of pride and agony and containing a record of its service was released.
5. Honorary Patronship of the Sabha was conferred on Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan; Shri Sharad Pawar, M.P.; Shri I. M. Kadri, Architect of the Sabha and Shri Jasu Shah, Philanthropist.
6. Special awards for services rendered to the Sabha were conferred on Dr. V. Subramanian, President Emeritus and Shri S. Seshadri. Shri Jayaram Mani received the award on behalf of his father, late Shri R. S. Mani. Shri T. R. Sampath received the honours conferred posthumously on late Prof. T. V. Ramanujam.
7. The orphaned children of Shradhanand Mahilashram, Matunga were provided a grand feast on 31st August 2002. A special Golden Jubilee cake was cut by the children of the home in celebration of the Golden Jubilee.
8. *Shri Jasu Shah Art Gallery:*
 Shri Jasu Shah Art-Gallery constructed at a cost of Rs. 20 lakhs and sponsored with a

substantial donation from Jasubhai Shah Foundation was inaugurated on 1st September 2002 by Shri Jasu Shah. Master Nirman Olwe, an eight year old promising artiste had the inaugural exhibition of fifty of his works.

9. Golden Jubilee Music Symposium on 'Music Therapy':

The 2 day symposium which focussed on the therapeutic effects of music on human beings was inaugurated on 14th September 2002, by the eminent Neuro Surgeon, Brigadier (Hon) Dr. B. Ramamurthy. Dr. Raja Ramanna, distinguished Scientist and former Union Minister was the Chief Guest on the second day. The valedictory function was addressed by Shri K. S. Mahadevan. While the symposium theme address was effectively done by Garland N. Rajagopalan, the keynote address was delivered by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa. Shri N. Pattabhiraman concluded the proceedings.

Eminent medical professionals, scientists, musicians and musicologists from all over India shared their expertise and experience on the curative element of music. The symposium attracted 727 delegates.

Inaugural Session: (14.9.2002)

Inauguration : Brigadier (Hon.) Dr. B. Ramamurthy
Welcome Address : Sabha President Shri V. Shankar
Theme Address : Brigadier (Hon.) Dr. B. Ramamurthy,
'Garland' Shri N. Rajagopalan
Keynote Address : Dr. V. V. Srivatsa

Session I

"Music as a Stimulant" : Sangita Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamurthy
"Music, Brain & Yoga" : Brigadier (Hon.) Dr. B. Ramamurthy
"Music Therapy & Astrology" : Mahamahopadhyaya Kollegal Subramanyam

Session II

"Sur Sanjeevan" : Pt. Shashank Katti, Dr. Himalaya Pantvaidya &
Dr. Sanjay Chhajer
"Therapeutic Music" : Dr. T. V. Sairam
Music Concert by : Priya Sisters & Party

Session III: (15.9.2002)

Welcome Address : Sabha President Shri V. Shankar
Chief Guest : Dr. Raja Ramanna
"Music & Brain" : Dr. N. Subbulakshmy
"Possibilities of Development of Raga Counterpoint" : Dr. Raja Ramanna
"Ghandharva Veda Chikitsa" : Dr. Vijaya M. Lele

Session IV

"Music as a Mood Enhancer" : Dr. T. Mythily
"Effect of Music on Depression" : Smt. Purnima Pujare
"Efficacy of Music Therapy" : Shri K. S. Mahadevan

Valedictory Session

Moderator : "Garland" Shri N. Rajagopalan
Music Concert by : Sangita Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamurthy & Party

Honorary Patronship

On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee, the Sabha conferred its honorary patronship to several distinguished artistes and to a few active supporters of its cause.

S.No.	Name	Date of conferment
1.	Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan	31.08.2002
2.	Sharad Pawar, M. P.	31.08.2002
3.	I. M. Kadri, Hon. Architect	31.08.2002
4.	Jasu Shah, Philantropist	31.08.2002
5.	Pandit Bhimsen Joshi	07.08.2002
6.	Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra	24.10.2002
7.	Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer	22.12.2002
8.	Pandit Jasraj	28.01.2003
9.	Gangubhai Hangal	28.01.2003

Blood Donation Camps

Blood donation camps were organised in several colleges in the neighbourhood in Rotary Club, Indian Red Cross, Tata Memorial Hospital and Sion Hospital. 543 bottles of blood were collected.

Amrut Mahotsav Felicitations

The Sabha also felicitated, artistes who had reached 75 years during the year.

Shri. Nedunuri Krishnamurthy	-	15.09.2002
Prof. T. N. Krishnan	-	08.12.2002
Pandit Arvind Parikh	-	27.10.2002
M. Chandrasekharan (Violinist)	-	12.04.2003
(50 years of violin performance)		

Sandhya Vandan Series

The high point of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations were a series of discourses organised in the Sabha with a galaxy of Saints, Philosophers and Teachers.

Pujyasri Tejomayanandji, Head, Chinmaya Mission	Inspirations from Upanishads	02.10.2002
His Holiness Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji, Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam	General	01.11.2002
Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Arsha Gurukul Vidyashram	Vision of Sankara	12.11.2002 & 13.11.2002

Swami Parthasarthy of Vedanta Academy	Life in Focus	28.11.2002
Dada J. P. Vaswani	How to Build a Happy Home and Family	05.04.2003

Theatre Festival

United Visuals, Chennai presented two family dramas, "Ilavasa Enaiippu" and "Aasaikkum Aasthikkum" on 20th and 21st November 2002. A five day theatre festival is to be organised between 22nd July and 26th July 2003. It will feature the best of Indian theatre.

Troupe	Drama	Language	Date
United Visuals	Ilavasa Enaiippu	Tamil	20.11.02
Chennai	Aasaikkum Aasthikkum	Tamil	21.11.02

"India Unites" - Dances of Indian Festival

21.10.2002 to 27.10.2002

India's finest dances burst into life on the Sabha stage during the "India Unites" festival. It was joyful satisfaction witnessing a spectacular extravaganza during the week long festival. India's best artistes performed the best Indian dances while celebrating our Golden Jubilee.

21.10.2002	Kathak	Kadamb Centre for Dance & Music, Ahmedabad.
22.10.2002	Bharata Natyam	Urmila Satyanarayanan, Chennai.
23.10.2002	Dance ballet	'Andal Charitam', Kalakshetra Foundation, Rukmini Devi Arundale College of Fine Arts, Chennai.
24.10.2002	Odissi	Srujan, Orissa, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra.
25.10.2002	Kuchipudi	'Krishna Parijatham' - Kuchipudi Kalakendra, Mumbai.
26.10.2002	Kathakali	'Dussassana Vadhom', Kerala Kalamandalam, Thrissur.
27.10.2002	Mohini Attam	Bharati Sivaji, New Delhi.

SRI SHANMUKHANANDA NATIONAL EMINENCE AWARDS

The Bhisma Pitamaha of Carnatic Music, Padma Vibhushan, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer was conferred the Sri Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award at a glittering function on 22nd December 2002. The 95 year old Jambhavan of Indian Music did the Institution and the Award proud by accepting the honours and coming all the way from Chennai to receive it. The Award comprised of a citation, a silver lamp, Shanmukha icon and a cash award of Rs. 1.0 lakh.

The Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani Awards were conferred on Mrs. Sruthi Sadolika Katkar, noted Hindustani Singer and Shri Sanjay Subrahmanyam, noted Carnatic musician. The Award carried a citation, Shanmukha icon and a cash award of Rs. 25,000/- Shri Niladri Kumar, noted Sitarist received the Award during the Mumbai Music festival on 26th January 2003. The Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani Awards are given to three emerging artistes in any field of Fine Arts, each year.

National Awards for Women Achievers in Social Work

In association with Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhini Trust, Chennai the Sabha felicitated and honoured 16 women achievers in social work on 1st February 2003. Shri Mohammed Fazal, Governor of Maharashtra and Shri P. S. Ram Mohan Rao, Governor of Tamil Nadu presided over the function. Noted writer Sivasankari and Dr. Anji K. Reddy, Chairman, Reddy Laboratories Ltd. were the guests of honour. Swami Nityananda Giri of Tapovan, Thirukoillur graced the function. The awardees were:

S.N.	Name	State	Name of the Organisation	Focus Area
1	Ms. Indira D. Kothari	Tamil Nadu	Guild of Service	Children, Women, Disabled, Mentally Challenged and Families.
2	Ms. Meena Dadha	Tamil Nadu	Mukti	Manufacture and Donation of Artificial Limbs and Callipers
3	Ms. C. K. Gariyali	Tamil Nadu	Secretary, Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Scheme	Government Social Welfare Schemes
4	Ms. S. V. Vasumathi	Tamil Nadu	Sri Vishwavidyalaya Mat. School	Education in the Rural Areas.
5	Ms. Nalini Gangadharan	Andhra Pradesh	Dr. Reddy's Foundation for Human and Social Development	Alleviate Urban Poverty, Children, Youth & Women.

6	Ms. Shanta Sinha	Andhra Pradesh	M. V. Foundation	Education of Children in the Rural Areas.
7	Ms. Sunanda Tolabandhi	Karnataka	Ujwal Rural Development Service	Upliftment of Backward and Downtrodden Communities, Tribal, Education, Social Activist.
8	Ms. Anjali Gopalan	New Delhi	NAZ Foundation	AIDS Awareness/Support to Victims.
9	Ms. Reena Bora	Assam	ICCW - Assam	Children
10	Ms. Girija Sapre	Maharashtra	Community Aid and Sponsorship Programme.	Child Health and Education.
11	Ms. Sudha Balachandra	Maharashtra	NASEOH	Education, Vocational Training and Support to the Physically Disabled.
12	Dr. Grace Mathews	Maharashtra	Retd. Professor - TISS	Social Work Education/Research
13	Ms. Shabnam Ramaswamy	West Bengal	Street Survivors India	Street Children/Women/Rural Deprived Children
14	Ms. Meenakshi Balasubramaniam	Maharashtra	MBA Foundation	Life Care Centres for Disabled/Disadvantaged Persons
15	Ms. Kasturi Mohapatra	Orissa	Open Learning Systems	Children and Child Rights
16	Ms. Jabeen Jambughodwala	Gujarat	Sahaj	Empowering Tribal Women by Promoting Viable Art and Craft Based Activities.

A round table of Women Achievers on 'Role of Women in formulating an agenda for a developed India 2020' was conducted before the awards function. The participants were:

1. Mrs. Sivasankari
2. Capt. Saudamini Deshmukh, Women Pilot.
3. Akhila Srinivasan, Managing Director, Shriram Investment Ltd.
4. Dr. Nawaz Mody, University of Mumbai.
5. Sathya Saran, Editor, Femina.

Mrs. Shailaja Ganguly co-ordinated the discussions.

Fraternity Festival

During the Golden Jubilee Year the Sabha also celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of Bombay Tamil Sangham with a violin solo by Padma Bhushan Dr. L. Subramaniam on 28th December 2002.

Rashtrapathi Ke Saath

In a memorable function held on 15th February 2003. His Excellency Bharat Ratna Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, the President of India, had as part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations interacted with over 2500 children drawn from 118 schools from all over the city. Six Heads of Schools from each medium of instructions viz. English, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarathi and Tamil were honoured at his hands. The Rashtrapathi also gave a signed copy of his book "Ignited Minds" to 22 students. Each participating student was given a free copy of "Ignited Minds". Each school represented at the tete with the President, received for its library, 4 books penned by the President. The President chose 'Indomitable Spirit' as the theme of his address.

Shri Chhagan Bhujbal, Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra was also present.

Mumbai Music Festival

In commemoration of the Golden Jubilee, the Sabha organised The Mumbai Music Festival between 18.01.2003 and 26.01.2003. The festival featured a variety of artistes predominantly Hindustani musicians. A tribute to the young and emerging artistes of Hindustani Music was organised on 26th January 2003. 'PARAMPARA' featured siblings of great maestros.

18.01.03	Sarod Trilogy	Padmabhushan Ustad Amjad Ali Khan and his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash.
19.01.03	Vocal	Padmashri Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan
22.01.03	Ensemble of 50 violinists	Ms. A. Kanyakumari & Party
24.01.03	Vocal	Sriram Parasuram and Anuradha Parasuram
26.01.03 (Morning)	Parampara - I	Rakesh Chaurasia - Flute Kalapini Komkali - Vocal Satish Vyas - Santoor
26.01.03 (Evening)	Parampara - II	Suhas C. Vyas - Vocal Ashwini B. Deshpande - Vocal Niladri Kumar - Sitar
27.01.03	Vocal	Padmashri Begum Parveen Sultana and Ustad Dilshad Khan

Shri C. K. Parasuram, father of Sriram Parasuram was felicitated on 24.01.03 for his life time services in the cause of music.

Ragam-Thanam-Pallavi with 50 Ragamalika Swaras

In the benign presence of Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswati Swamiji, and as part of Mumbai Music Festival, Ms. Kanyakumari heading an ensemble of 50 violinists accompanied by Shri Mannargudi Easwaran on Mridangam, Shri Vaikom Gopalakrishnan on Ghatam, Shri Bangalore Rajsekhar on Morsing and Shri Sunder on Tabla composed and rendered a rare composition of 50 Ragamalika Swaras in honour of the Sabha on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee.

VRINDAVANI SARANG	[Janyam of 22 Kharaharapriya] Arohanam - SRMPNS	Avarohanam - SNPMRS
1. VALAJI	[Janyam of 16 Chakravaham] Arohanam - SGPDNS	Avarohanam - SNDPGS
2. ABHOGI	[Janyam of 22 Kharaharapriya] Arohanam - SRGMDS	Avarohanam - SDMGRS
3. SHANMUKHAPRIYA	[56 Melakartha] Arohanam - SRGMPDNS	Avarohanam - SNDPMGRS
4. VASANTHA	[Janyam of 17 Suryakantam] Arohanam - SGMDNS	Avarohanam - SNDMGRS
5. HAMSADHWANI	[Janyam of 29 Dheerashankharabharanam] Arohanam - SRGPNS	Avarohanam - SNPGRS
6. NAGASWARALI	[Janyam of 28 Harikambhoji] Arohanam - SGMPDS	Avarohanam - SDPMGS
7. SUDDHA THODI	[Janyam of 8 Hanumathodi] Arohanam - SRGMDNS	Avarohanam - SNDMGRS
8. BEGADA	[Janyam of 29 Dheerashankharabharanam] Arohanam - SGRGMPDPS	Avarohanam - SN,DPM,GRS
9. NATAKURUNJI	[Janyam of 28 Harikambhoji] Arohanam - SRGMNDNPDNS	Avarohanam - SNDMGRS
10. RANJANI	[Janyam of 50 Dharmavathi] Arohanam - SRGMDS	Avarohanam - SNDMGSRGs
11. KANNADA	[Janyam of 29 Dheerashankharabharanam] Arohanam - SMGMD,NS	Avarohanam - SDPMGMR,S
12. GOWLAI	[Janyam of 15 Mayamalavagowlai] Arohanam - SRMPNS	Avarohanam - SNPMRGMRs
13. ARABHI	[Janyam of 29 Dheerashankharabharanam] Arohanam - SRMPDS	Avarohanam - SNDPMGRS
14. SRI	[Janyam of 22 Kharaharapriya] Arohanam - SRMPNS	Avarohanam - SNPDNPMRGRS
15. VASANTHI	[Janyam of 27 Sarasaangi] Arohanam - SRGPDS	Avarohanam - SDPGRS
16. NAATAI	[Janyam of 36 Chalanaatai] Arohanam - SRGMPNS	Avarohanam - SNPMGMRS

17. NATAKAPRIYA	[10 th Melakartha] Arohanam - SRGMPDNS	Avarohanam - SNDPMGRS
18. KUNTALAVARALI	[Janyam of 28 Harikambhoji] Arohanam - SMPNDS	Avarohanam - SND 'MS
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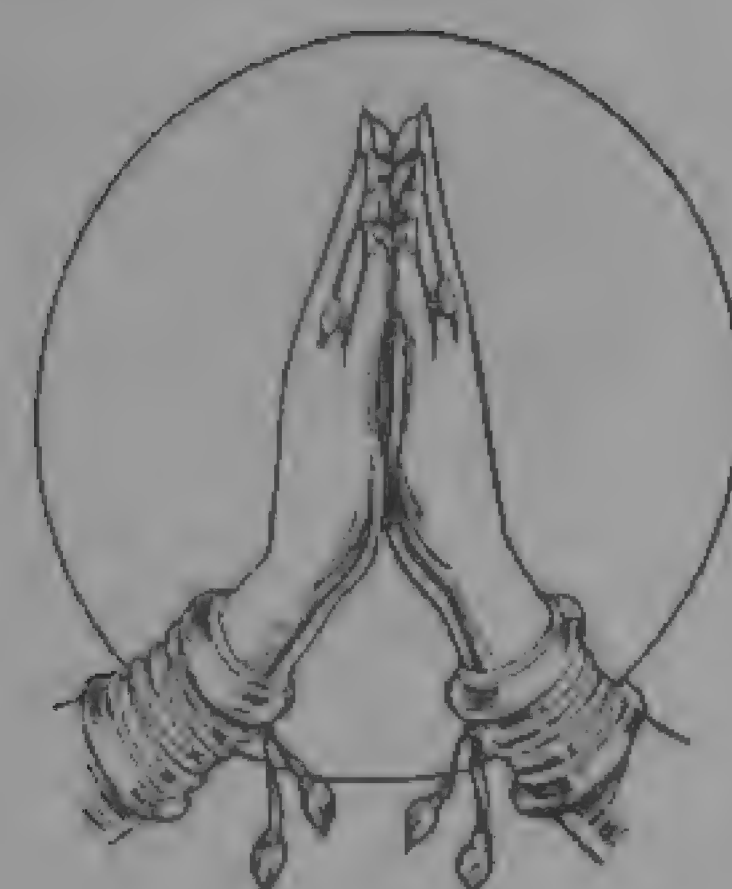


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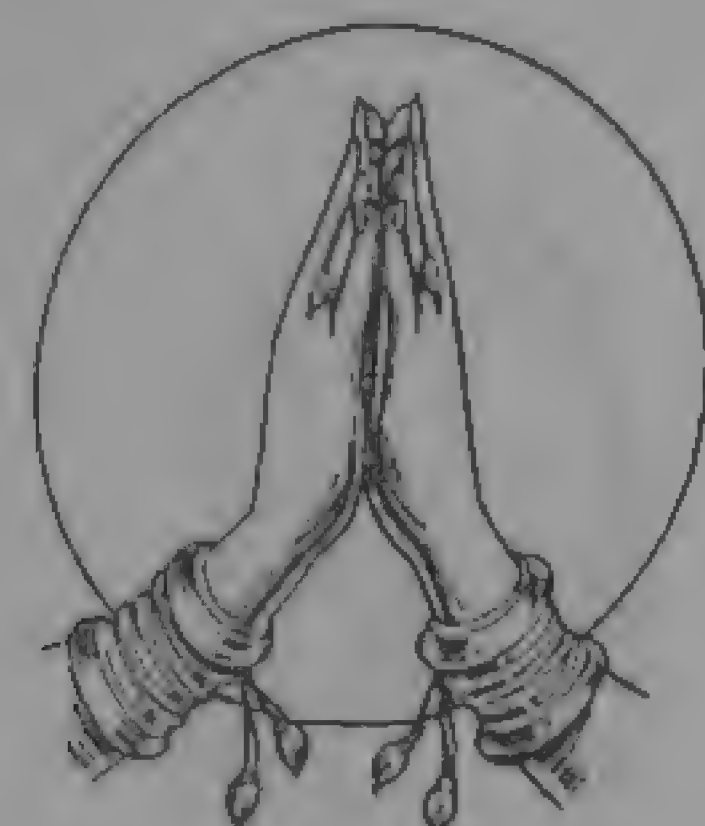


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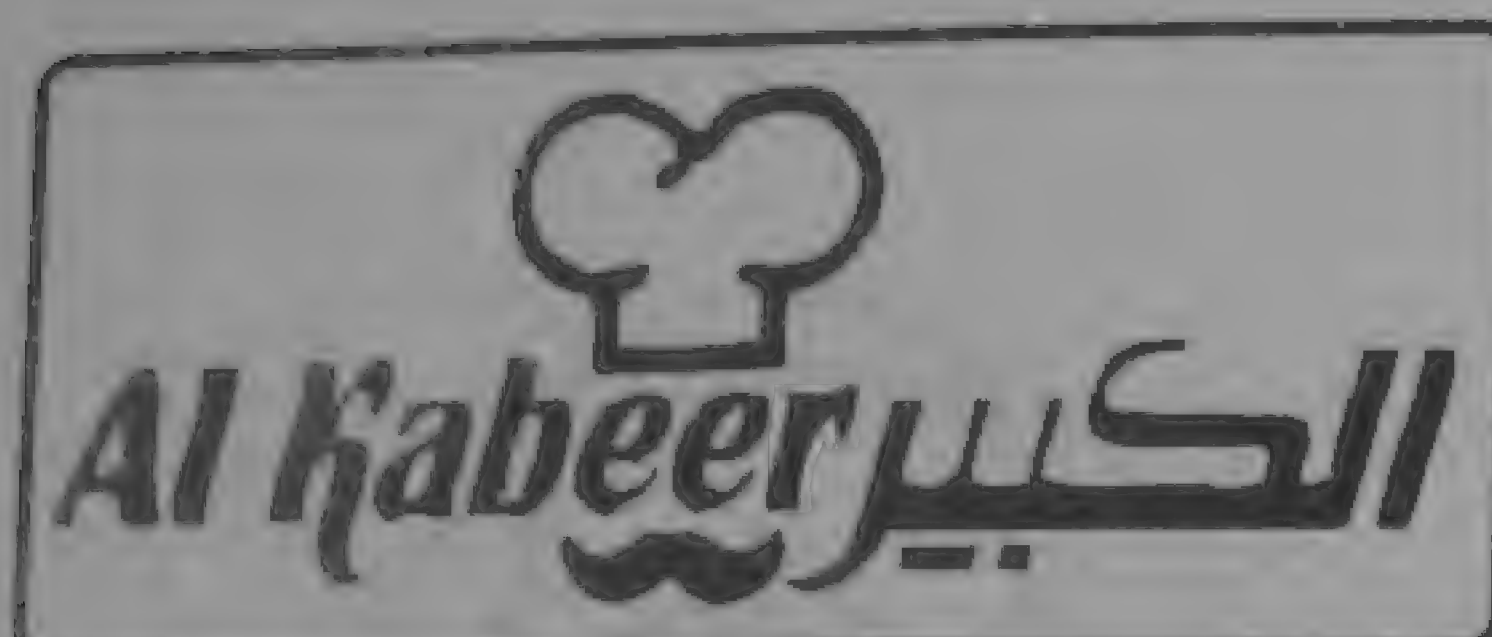


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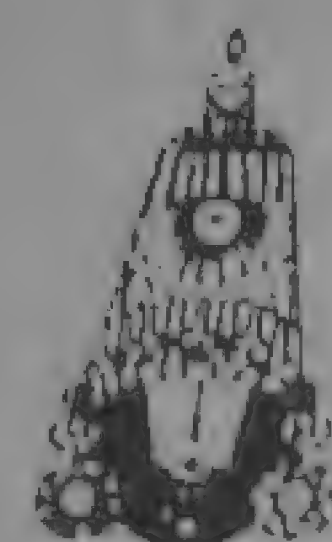
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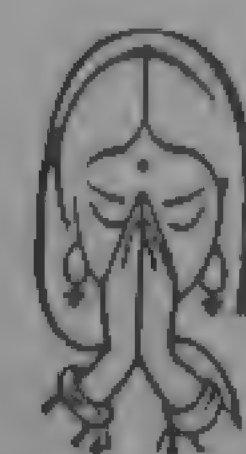


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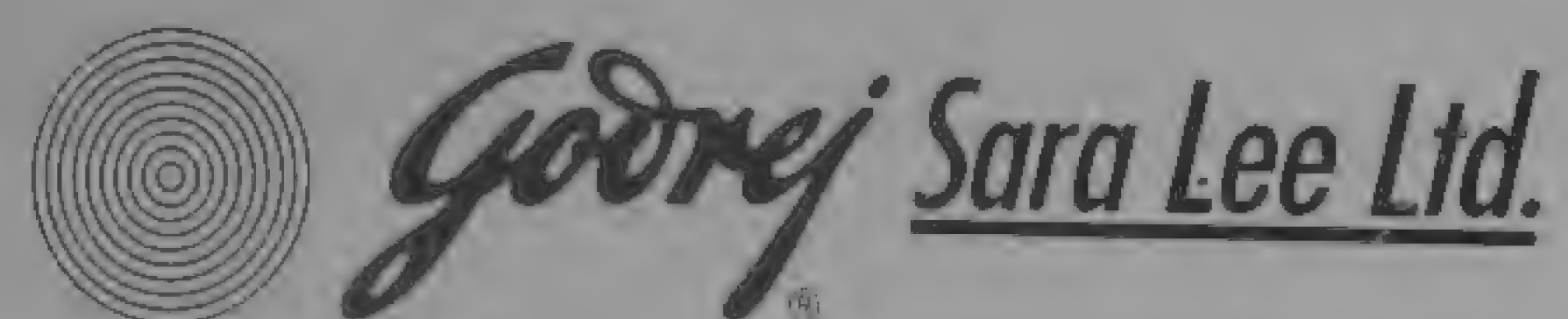
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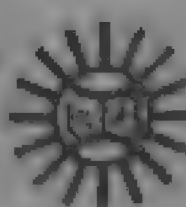


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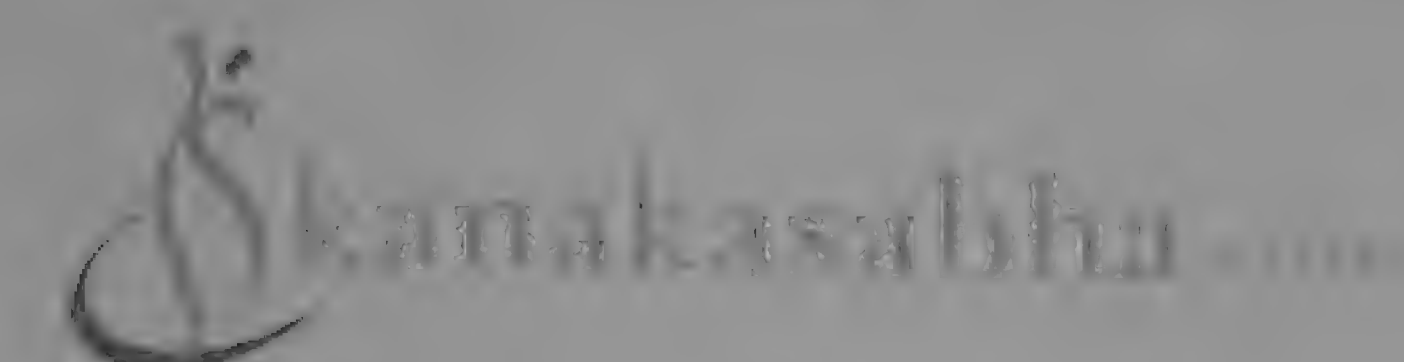
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சென்னை ஸங்கீத வித்வத் ஸபையின் 76வது ஆண்டு மஹாநாட்டின் விதுஷி சிக்கில் சகோதரிகள் ஸ்ரீமதி குஞ்சுமணி அவர்களின் உரை 15.12.2002

நமஸ்காரம், பெருமதிப்பிற்குரிய ஜனாதிபதி விஞ்ஞான மேதை திரு. அப்துல் கலாம் அவர்களே!

இந்த வித்வத் சபையைத் திறம்பட நிர்வகித்துவரும் திரு. T.T. வாஸ் அவர்களே மற்றும் உள்ள நிர்வாகிகளே, வித்வான்களே, வித்வாம்ஸினிகளே மற்றும் சென்னை நகர ரஸிகப் பெருமக்களே நமஸ்காரம்.

இந்த வருடம் "ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி" என்னும் மிகப் பெரிய கௌரவத்தை எனக்கும், என் சகோதரி திருமதி நீலாவிற்கும்

இந்த வித்வத் ஸபை அளித்திருக்கிறது. எனக்கும் என் சகோதரிக்கும் இரட்டிப்பு சந்தோஷம். இரண்டு பேராக விருது வாங்குகிறோம் என்பது சந்தோஷம், இந்த வித்வத் ஸபையின் பிளாட்டினம் விழா கொண்டாடப்படுகிறது. அதற்கும் மேலாக தமிழ்நாட்டிலிருந்து சென்றிருக்கும் நமது சகோதரர் இந்திய ஜனாதிபதி திரு. அப்துல் கலாம் அவர்கள் இவ்விழாவிற்கு தலைமை தாங்க வந்திருப்பது எங்களுக்கு கிடைத்த மிகப் பெரிய கௌரவம்.

இந்த நேரத்தில் மாதா, பிதா, குரு, தெய்வம் என்பார்கள். அவர்கள் அனைவருக்கும் இந்த கௌரவத்தைக் காணிக்கை ஆக்குகிறோம்.

மாதா

என் தாயார் திருமதி சீதா, நாங்கள் இந்த உலகிற்கு வர காரணமாக இருந்தவர். இசைஞானம் உள்ளவர். எங்களை புல்லாங்குழல் வாசிக்க ஊக்குவித்தவர்.

பிதா

என் தகப்பனார் திரு ஆழியூர் நடேச ஐயர்.



சிக்கில் சகோதரிகள் ஸ்ரீமதி குஞ்சுமணி ஸ்ரீமதி நீலா

ஆழியூர் சாமி ஐயர் அவர்களுடைய புதுவரை என் தாத்தா, என் அப்பா இருவருமே மிருதங்க வித்வான்கள். என் தகப்பனார் ஆழியூர் நடேச ஐயர், முடிகொண்டான், மதுரை மணி ஐயர், அரியக்குடி, செம்பை, மஹாராஜபுரம், செம்மங்குடி, முசிறி சுப்பிரமணியம், மாஸி எல்லோருக்கும் பக்கவாத்தியம் வாசித்திருக்கிறார். எங்களுக்கு லயஞானத்தை கற்றுக் கொடுத்தது எங்கள் தந்தைதான். வாய்பாட்டு மாதிரியே வாசிக்க வேண்டும் என்று வலியுறுத்துவார். அவர் கேட்ட பழைய கால மகா வித்வான்களான கோனேரி ராஜபுரம் வைத்யநாத அய்யர், மதுரை புஷ்பவனம் அய்யர், மன்னார்குடி சின்ன பக்கிரி நாதஸ்வரம் இவைகளை எடுத்துக் காட்டாக பாடிக் காண்பித்து அது மாதிரி இருக்க வேண்டும் என்பதை அடிக்கடி சொல்வார்.

குரு

எங்கள் பெரியப்பா ஆழியூர் நாராயணசாமி ஐயர் தான் எங்கள் குரு. அவர் ஒரு புல்லாங்குழல் வித்துவான். மற்ற வாத்தியங்களையும் கையாளத் தெரியும். நாகஸ்வரம் கூட வாசிப்பார். முதலில் நானும், சகோதரி நீலாவும் தனித் தனியாகத்தான்

வாசித்துக் கொண்டிருந்தோம். அப்புறம்தான் Sikkal Sisters என்று சேர்ந்து வாசிக்கத் தொடங்கினோம். அதுவும் ஒரு குடும்ப நண்பர் கொண் பெயரைக் கொண்டோம்.

தெய்வம்

தெய்வம் மனித ரூபத்தில் வரும் என்பார்கள். அந்த விஷயத்தில் எங்கள் கணவர்தான் எங்களுக்கு தெய்வம். எங்களை உற்சாகப்படுத்தி, எங்களை வழி நடத்தி, எங்களை இந்த அளவிற்கு உயர்த்தியிருப்பதில் பெரும்பங்கு அவரைச்சாரும்.

சரித்திர காலம் என்று எடுத்துக் கொண்டால், அரசர்கள் கலைஞர்களை ஆதரித்ததாக நிறைய ஆதாரங்கள் உண்டு.

இன்று அந்தப் பொறுப்பை ஸங்கீத சபாக்கள் ஏற்றுக் கொண்டுள்ளன. நல்ல ஸங்கீதத்திற்கு நல்ல அங்கீகாரம் கிடைப்பது நல்ல அறிகுறி. ஒரு கால கட்டத்தில் Education கல்வி அறிவுதான் முக்கியமாக கருதப்பட்டது. பாட்டு என்பது Extra Curricular அல்லது Hobbyயாக இருந்தது. இன்று இசைக்கு கிடைத்துள்ள அங்கீகாரம், உலக அரங்கிற்கே அழைத்துப் போகிறது. இன்றைய தலைமுறை புத்திசாலிகள் படிப்பையும் நன்றாகப் படித்துக் கொண்டு இசையையும் முறையாகக் கற்றுக் கொள்கிறார்கள். முழு நேரமாக இசையையும் எடுத்துக் கொள்கிறார்கள். இது வரவேற்கத்தகுந்த மாற்றம்.

இளைய தலைமுறைகளுக்கு ஒரே ஒரு விண்ணப்பம் அஸ்திவாரம் உறுதியாக இருக்க வேண்டும். அப்போதுதான் கட்டிடம் உறுதியாக இருக்கும். அதற்கு ஒரே வழி உழைப்புதான். முயற்சி திருவினையாக்கும். இதில் சந்தேகமே இல்லை. குரலாக இருந்தாலும், வாத்யமாக இருந்தாலும் நம் கட்டுப்பாட்டிற்குள் கொண்டுவர வேண்டும். அதுதான் முக்கியம். எங்களுக்கு அதிகம் பரிச்சயமானது குழல்தான்.

ஆய கலைகள் அறுபத்து நாலில் புல்லாங்குழல் வாசிப்பது ஒன்றாகக் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. கடவுள் அருளினால் எங்களக்கு புல்லாங்குழல் வாசிக்க முடிகிறது. என்னைப் பொறுத்தவரை பேசுவதும் ஒரு கலை.

அது எங்களுக்கு கை வராத கலை. ஆகவே, அதையும் வாசித்து விடுகிறோம். வாசிப்பது எங்களுக்கு கலம்.

எனக்கும், என் சகோதரி நீலாவிற்கும் பேச்சு முச்சு எல்லாமே Flute தான். இன்றைய இளைய தலைமுறைக்கு அறிவு அதிகம். நாங்கள் Flute கற்றுக் கொண்ட காலத்தில் இசைக்குதான் முக்கியத்துவம். இன்றைய தலைமுறை எதைக் கற்றுக் கொண்டாலும் அதன் ஆதாரத்திலிருந்து எல்லாவற்றையும் ஆதாரபூர்வமாகத் தெரிந்து கொள்கிறார்கள். புத்தகங்கள், ஒலி நாடாக்கள், இன்னும் இன்றைய Computer வரை அவர்கள் கேள்விகளுக்கு விடை கொடுக்கிறது. நாங்கள் அனுபவபூர்வமாக கற்றுக் கொண்டதை இன்றைய தலைமுறை அறிவியல் பூர்வமாக கற்றுக் கொள்கிறார்கள். பாராட்டப்பட வேண்டிய செயல்.

எங்களுக்கு இன்று இந்த கௌரவத்தை அளித்த புல்லாங்குழலைப் பற்றி எங்களுக்குத் தெரிந்த சில விஷயங்களை உங்களுடன் பகிர்ந்து கொள்கிறோம்.

வாத்தியங்களில் பிரதானமாக காற்று வாத்தியங்களில் புல்லாங்குழலும், தாள வாத்தியங்களில் மிருதங்கமும், தந்தி வாத்தியங்களில் வீணையும் மேன்மையாக சொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

புல்லாங்குழல் என்றதும் நினைவுக்கு வருவது கண்ணன். மழலைக்கு அடுத்தபடி உயர்வாக வள்ளுவன் நினைப்பது குழலைத்தான். கோகுலத்தில் கண்ணன், தன் மழலையையும், குழலையும் சேர்த்துதான் எல்லோரையுமே மயக்கினான். திருப்பாவையில் ஆண்டாள பாடியதுபோல், கோகுலத்தில் இருந்த பசுக்கள் “வாங்கக்குடம் நிறைக்கும் வள்ளலாக இருந்தன.” இசையினால் பயிர் வளரும் என்பது விஞ்ஞானபூர்வமாக இன்று கூறுகின்றனர். இசை இயற்கையுடன் இணைந்த படைப்பு. வாத்தியங்களை எடுத்துக் கொண்டால் எல்லா வாத்தியங்களும் இயற்கையின் ஒரு பகுதிதான். புல்லாங்குழல் என்று எடுத்துக் கொண்டால் பஞ்சபூதங்கள் என்று சொல்கிற நீர், நிலம், நெருப்பு, காற்று, ஆகாயம் இவற்றுடன் முழுத் தொடர்பு இதற்கு உண்டு. மூங்கில் மரமாக

நிலத்தில் வளர்ந்து, நீரை உணவாகக் கொண்டு வளர்ந்து, மூச்சு எனும் அக்னியை உள்ளே வாங்கி, இசை என்பதை காற்றின் மூலம் ஆகாயத்தில் கலக்கச் செய்கிறது. கண்ணனுக்கு அடுத்தபடி புல்லாங்குழலை கையாண்டது காற்றுதான். மூங்கில் காடுகளில் வண்டு துளைத்த மூங்கிலை தன் இசைக் கருவியாக முதலில் பயன்படுத்தியது காற்று. ஆகவே புல்லாங்குழலைப் பொறுத்தவரை அதை வாசிக்க கற்றுக் கொடுத்த குரு காற்றுதான். பஞ்சபூதங்கள் என்பது உலகத்திற்குப் பொதுவான ஒன்று. அதேபோல பரம்பொருளும் உலகத்திற்குப் பொதுவானவன். பரம்பொருள், பஞ்சபூதங்கள் இரண்டும் தொடர்புடையதாலோ என்னவோ, மற்ற வாத்தியங்களை விட உலகெங்கும் பரிச்சயமான வாத்தியம் புல்லாங்குழல்.

வெளிநாட்டிலிருந்து வரும் பலருக்கு நம் நாட்டின் பல வாத்தியங்கள் புதுமையானவை. ஆனால் புல்லாங்குழலைப் பொறுத்தவரை அது ஒரு Universal Instrument “மோதிரக் கையால் குட்டு” என்பார்கள். தாமோதரன் கை பட்டதாயிற்றே. எப்படி உலகறியாமல் போகும்?

உலக நாடுகள் என்று சொல்லும் போது எகிப்தில் இருந்த பழங்கால Flute (SEBI) ஸெபி. இது மிகவும் நீளமானது. வாசிப்பவர் கடைசி துளையை உபயோகிக்க அவருடைய முழு கையையும் நீட்ட வேண்டியிருக்குமாம். நவீன Flute (NAY) என்று சொல்கிறார்கள்.

ஐரோப்பாவில், மியூஸியத்தில் Flute Collection இருக்கிறது. அதில், 2 துளைகளிலிருந்து 8 துளைகள் வரை உள்ள புல்லாங்குழல் இருக்கிறது. மதிப்பிற்குரிய Professor திரு. P. சாம்பமுர்த்தி அவர்கள் எழுதிய புத்தகத்தில் சுவாரசியமான பல தகவல்கள் இருக்கின்றன.

ரஷ்யா, சீனா போன்ற நாடுகளிலும் Flute இருந்ததற்கான ஆதாரங்கள் இருக்கின்றன. அமெரிக்காவில் Dayton C. Miller என்பவர் பலவிதமான புல்லாங் குழலை சேகரித்து வைத்திருக்கிறார். அதைப் படம் பிடித்து, அவைகளைப் பற்றிய விபரங்களையும் எழுதியிருக்கிறார்.

உலக அரங்கிற்கு அடுத்தபடி நமது நாடு என்று எடுத்துக் கொண்டால் பெரிய புராணத்தில்-63 நாயன்மார்களில் ஒருவரான “Anaya Nayanar” ஆனாய நாயனார் கையாண்டது கூறப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. சிலப்பதிகாரத்தில் கோவலன் புல்லாங்குழல் வாசித்ததாக செய்தி உள்ளது. சிலப்பதிகாரத்தில் புல்லாங் குழல் செய்யும் முறை விளக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. சிலப்பதிகாரத்தில் மூன்றுவிதமான புல்லாங்குழல் சொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

ஸாரங்க தேவர் தன்னுடைய “சங்கீத ரத்தினாகரத்தில்” 15 விதமான புல்லாங்குழல் பற்றி சொல்லியிருக்கிறார்.

அஜந்தா குகைகளில் உள்ள பெயிண்டிங்கில் நீள புல்லாங்குழல் வரையப்பட்டிருப்பது ஒரு சுவாரசியமான செய்தி.

புல்லாங்குழலுக்கும், மனித குரலுக்கும் ஒற்றுமை உண்டு. இரண்டுக்கும் ஆதாரம் காற்று. புல்லாங்குழல் வாசிக்கும்போது நுரையினால் லிருந்து வரும் காற்று கமகங்கள், இல்லாமல், Flute-ல் வாய்ப்பகுதி வழியாக செலுத்தப்படுகிறது. வாய்ப்பாட்டு பாடும்போது இதே காற்று கமகங்களுடன் வெளிவருகிறது.

வாய்ப்பாட்டு, Flute இரண்டிலும் ஒரே நேரத்தில் ஒரு Note-தான் கொண்டு வரமுடியும்.

புல்லாங்குழலில் மிகப் பெரிய விசேஷம் Speed- வேகம். வாய்ப்பாட்டில், வேகம் என்பது கடினமான ஒன்று. தந்தி வாத்தியங்களிலும் வேகம் என்பது கடினமாக ஒன்று. கதன குதரகலம் Flute-ல் வாசிக்கும்போது குதரகலமாக தூழ்நிலையே உருவாகும்.

“Old is Gold” என்பது Flute-க்கு மிகவும் பொருத்தமான ஒரு பேச்சு. உபயோகிக்க, உபயோகிக்க நம்மை அதிகம் புரிந்து கொண்டு உழைக்கும் புல்லாங்குழல். புதிய புல்லாங்குழல் எத்தனை சரியாக அமைந்திருந்தாலும், சில கமகங்கள், ஸ்வரங்களை வாசிக்கும் போது நாம் நினைத்த அளவு வருவதில்லை. “Bonding with this instrument is a must for best performance” என்பது எங்கள் அபிப்பிராயம். ஒருவர் உபயோகித்த புல்லாங்குழலை மற்றொருவர் உபயோகித்தாலும், அது உடனே சொறபடி

கேட்காது, குழந்தைபோல் குழலும் "Very Possessive".

தந்தி வாத்தியங்கள் போல் தேவையான சுருதி (Pitch)-யில் அமைத்துக் கொள்ளமுடியாது. புல்லாங்குழல் துயாறிக்கும்போதே அகுனுடைய Pitch-ம் தீர்மானிக்கப்பட்டுவிடுகிறது.

புல்லாங்குழலைப் பற்றிப் பேச ஆரம்பித்தால் நேரம் போவதே தெரியாது. சங்கீத ரத்னாகரத்தில் ஸார்ங்கதேவர் - வாத்தியங்களின் ப்ரியோக விதிகளை வலனித்துள்ளார்.

1. கஷ்ட பிரயோகம் - தனியாக வாசிப்பது Solo எனப்படுவது.
2. கீதானுகம் - பக்க வாத்தியமாக பிரயோகம்.
3. நிருத்தானுகம் - ஆடலுக்கான இசையில் ஒரு அங்கமாக பிரயோகம்.
4. தவயானுகம் - வாய்ப்பாட்டுக்கும், ஆடலுக்கும் ஏக்கால பிரயோகம்.

(உடன் வாசிப்பது)

இந்த நான்கு பிரயோகங்களிலும் புல்லாங்குழலுக்கு இடம் உண்டு என்பது மிகவும் விசேஷமான ஒன்று.

பொதுவாக வழக்கத்தில் முன்று குழல்கள் உள்ளன:

1. குறுக்காகவோ, பக்கமாகவோ ஊதுப்படும் குழல்கள்.
2. வாய்க்கருவி பொருத்திய நேராக ஊதுப்படும் குழல்கள். இவைகளை ரோக்டா என்பார்கள்.
3. மேல்நோக்கி ஊர்த்துவமாக வைத்து வாசிக்கப்படும் குழல்கள். இவை திறந்த முனையிலிருந்து வாசிக்கக் கூடியவை.

மூர்த்தி சிறியதாக இருந்தாலும், கீர்த்தி பெரியதாக உள்ள புல்லாங்குழலைப் பற்றி உங்களில் பலருக்கு தெரிந்திருக்கலாம். அதனுடைய செய்முறை பற்றியெல்லாம் விளக்கலாம். ஆனால், அதற்கு முன் இந்த வாத்தியத்திற்கு பெருமை சேர்த்த பெரியவர்களை நினைவுப்படுத்திக் கொள்ள கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கிறோம். சரப சாஸ்திரிகள்

கண்பார்வை அற்றவர். அவர் இந்த பூவுலகில் வாழ்ந்தது 32 வருடங்கள்தான். அவர் ஒரு தடவை புன்னாகவராளி ராகம் வாசித்தபோது, புற்றிலிருந்த பாம்புகள் அவர் எதிரே வந்து ஆடியதாக செய்தி உண்டு. ஒரு சமயம் சரப சாஸ்திரி அவர்கள், ஸார்ங்க ராகத்தில் அமைந்த "நீ வாட நே கான (Ni vada negana) என்ற கீர்த்தனையை உமையாள்புரம் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் பாடக் கேட்டார். அடுத்த நாளே சரப சாஸ்திரி அந்த கிருதியை வெகு நேர்த்தியாக வாசித்தாராம். சரப சாஸ்திரியாரைக் கட்டிக் கொண்ட பாகவதர் "ஆஹா! இந்த வாசிப்பைக் கேட்டு ஆனந்தப்பட என் குரு ஸ்ரீதியாகப் பரம்மம் உயிருடன் இல்லையே" என்று கூறினாராம். சரப சாஸ்திரியார் தன் வாரிசாக பல்லடம் ஸஞ்சீவ ராவிடம் தன் கலையைக் கொடுத்தார். அதற்குப் பிறகு திருப்பாம்பரம் ஸ்வாமிநாத பிள்ளை - இசை சுத்தத்திற்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டு. அவருடைய மாணவர் டி.விஸ்வநாதன். அடுத்து டி.ஆர். மகாலிங்கம் பற்றி அறியாதவர்கள் கிடையாது. பிறவிமேதை, அவரது சிஷ்யரான என். ரமணி இன்றைய முன்னணி வித்வான். இன்றைய இளையத் தலைமுறையில் சிறந்த கலைஞர், சிக்கல் மாலா சந்திரசேகரும் எங்கள் வழியில் தொடர்கிறார்.

இந்த வித்வத் சபையில் விருது பெற்ற பெண்மணிகள் 7 பேர் : (1) திருமதி M.S. சுப்புலக்ஷ்மி (2) திருமதி D. K. பட்டம்மாள், (3) திருமதி T. பாலசுரஸ்வதி, (4) திருமதி T. பிருந்தா, (5) திருமதி M. L. வசந்தகுமாரி, (6) திருமதி மணிகிருஷ்ண சுவாமி, (7) திருமதி R. வேதவல்லி. இந்த வரிசையில் நாங்களும் சேர்வது எங்களுக்கு மிகப் பெரிய கௌரவம்.

புல்லாங்குழல் என்று கூறும்போது, அதைக் கற்றுக் கொள்பவர்கள் எண்ணிக்கை குறைகிறதோ என்கிற பயம் எங்களுக்கு வருகிறது. Professor திரு சாம்பமூர்த்தி சொல்லியது போல் பள்ளிக் குழந்தைகளுக்கே குழலைக் கையில் கொடுத்து அவர்களுக்கு ஆர்வத்தை வளர்க்கலாம்.

பத்திரிகையாளர்கள், AIR, TV, சபாக்கள், ரசிகர்கள் இவர்கள் அளித்துள்ள ஆதரவை

எங்களால் மறக்க இயலாது. அவர்களுக்கும் எங்கள் நன்றி.

இறுதியாக இன்று எனக்கும், என் சகோதரி நீலாவிற்கும் அளிக்கப்பட்ட இந்த கௌரவத்திற்கு இந்த வித்வத் சபைக்கும் மற்றும் இங்குள்ள பெரியவர்களுக்கும், ரசிகப் பெருமக்களுக்கும் எங்கள் இதயபூர்வமான நன்றியினைத் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறோம். எல்லாவற்றுக்கும் மேலாக, இந்த சமயத்தில் எங்களுக்குப் பக்கவாத்தியம் வாசித்த

கலைஞர்களுக்கும் பெரும்பங்கு உண்டு. ஒரு கச்சேரி என்பது குடும்பம். அவர்களின் பிரதிநிதியாக நாங்கள் இருக்கிறோம் என்று வேண்டுமானாலும் சொல்லலாம். ஆக, பக்கவாத்தியக் கலைஞர்களுக்கு எங்கள் நன்றியைச் சொல்லக் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கிறோம். மீண்டும் நன்றி சொல்லி, எங்களைப் படைத்த இறைவனிடம் "குறையொன்றும் இல்லை மறைமூர்த்தி கண்ணா" என்று மானசீகமாக நன்றி கூறி என உரையை முடிக்கிறேன். நமஸ்காரம்.



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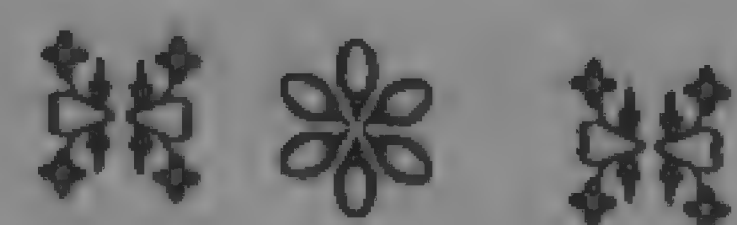
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INTERVIEW WITH SEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA IYER

by P. N. Krishnamoorthy, Hon. Editor 'Shanmukha'

In an exhaustive interview, the doyen of Carnatic Music who is often referred to as the Pithamaha, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, expresses his views on a wide variety of subjects relating to the history and the current state of Carnatic Music. He says:

"Carnatic music, even in its most ancient form has been closely interlinked with religion. Thus Thirugnana Sambandar, Sundaramurthy Nayanar and Manickavasagar all sang on the Gods and that tradition holds sway even today. The Odhuvars also sang the praise of the Lord in temples. Thus traditional music has been grown and groomed principally through the medium of religion. A few decades ago temple festivals and socio-religious functions such as festivals and marriages had traditional music and dance as an essential element. Marriages were celebrated over a four day period and every day was laced with music by nagaswara vidwans and other musicians. The sanctity and purity of the music was carefully preserved on such occasions. In those days, there was no scope for recording, which was a good thing (he laughs). In the present day, music has been considerable devalued. It can be heard almost everywhere and thus may have gained popularity, but has lost its sanctity. The accent in music today especially in TV, is on attractiveness of appearance rather than on the quality of the music rendered.

"Gurukulavasam along with its traditional values has almost disappeared. Shishyas in the old days served their guru's household voluntarily with little or no degree of compulsion. I had six or seven shishyas who, at various times, were members of my household. Today, taped music has become the principal learning medium. In the present day world, doing the wrong thing has become the in thing. Hence the sustained quality of music has taken a beating. If I were to compare gurus of the earlier years with

teachers of today, I can only say that many of today's teachers have little respect for the sanctity of music, and look upon it purely as a medium for making a living. As for present day students, they appear to be treating the study of music as a past time and those who take to it seriously are doing so mainly for commercial purposes.

"If music were to retain its high standards, there would be no dearth of listeners. But when there is a steady deterioration of standards, there cannot be many loyal listeners. In our days there were a large number of vidwans. Today we have a large number of singers with very few qualifying to be vidwans. During and after the British days, many rulers of the numerous states of India provided active support and sustenance for many forms of art, principally music. Subsequently people living in city areas formed organizations for the support of music and musicians. Concerts by prominent musicians were arranged periodically and this enabled the musicians to make a decent living.

"About sixty or seventy years ago, an average concert would have an audience of about three hundred. They listened to the music with great concentration and respect, particularly so in the absence of electronic amplification devices. The saareeram or voice is a God given gift and it should not be misused. Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer, Madurai Pushpavanam, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar and Palladam Sanjeevi Rao were some prominent musicians of those days. Today the mike has become an enemy of good music. In these circumstances, the musicians sing and the audiences chat away.

"In this context I would like to relate an incident. The great Western violinist Yehudi Menuhin visited Trivandrum when I was in the Swathi Thirunal Academy of Music. At his

request I sang the raga Sankarabharanam, which is the major scale in Western music and followed it with a composition. Yehudi Menuhin was very pleased with the rendering and expressed a desire to spend three months with me to learn our system of music. I did not take his words too seriously as I knew that the request was made more out of courtesy than anything else. He followed this up by asking me whether I had any particular desire. I said that I would like him to play a concert in the Swathi Thirunal Sangeetha Sabha with which I was actively associated. He left the matter to his wife who imposed two conditions - one that there should be no mike and two that there should be no entry or exit of persons during the concert. As there was a sizeable white population at that time, we had a full house for the concert. I went round the hall to ascertain whether the music could be heard perfectly in every part of the hall. I was more than satisfied with the results. While five hundred persons can conveniently hear an un-amplified vocal music only about fifty persons can hear the natural sound of a violin. This is the reason why the famous Chowdaiah introduced the seven stringed violin. As for the Veena, it can be heard only by a few people until Balachander came out with his contact mike. Present day musicians keep the mike so close to their mouth that they almost seem to swallow it (laughs). Under such conditions the music is no longer music but noise. Palghat Mani Iyer and I expressed a dislike for the mike. But organizers were of the view that because of the reduced audiences in the absence of the mike, they could not afford to pay us the kind of money that we used to receive in those days. Although we said that we would be perfectly willing to receive less money, the idea did not gain ground. Even when there is electronic amplification, I am of the view that the sound level should not be more than what an average audience member would discern when he is within hearing distance of the singer. Audiences seem to be more interested in their being recognized and their conversation has rarely anything to do with

the music that they are supposed to be listening to.

"In this context I wish to recall an incident. A famous lawyer and his sons were hosting a reception in connection with a marriage in the family. Although the concert was being held in a different part of the hall in order that the musician may not be disturbed, some people, as is their wont, were involved in an animated conversation. A son of the family led the guilty persons out of the hall by force and reprimanded them for disturbing the concert. The persons concerned took the reprimand in their stride because a well understood sense of discipline prevailed in those days. If such an incident were to be repeated today, the results could very well be imagined.

"Another incident that comes to my mind in this connection involves the famous percussion artist of yesteryear, Dakshinamurthy Pillai. He was like a commander-in-chief in a cutcheri, who would not tolerate any disturbance from the audience. On one occasion when Musiri Subramanya Iyer was singing in the Gokhale Hall, the thani avarthanam had commenced and there was some disturbance from the audience. Pillaival immediately turned to them and admonished them with the words 'Do you have any gnanam? Did you come here to listen to the music or to chat?' No one in the audience took any objection to this intervention. However such a protest from a musician today would have elicited a violent reaction from the crowd."

Semmangudi went on to share with us his reminiscences on Chembai Vaidyanadha Bhagavathar.

"Chembai had such a great voice that he needed a silencer rather than a mike. He possessed a 'gandharva saareeram', which no one has possessed and no one is likely to possess in the foreseeable future. He was a great bhakta who shed his mortal coils with the name of Lord Guruvayoorappan on his lips. His first and last performance occurred in the same location in Ottapalam in Kerala. His final performance was a great four hour

one at the end of which he returned to his place of stay and had an 'anaayaasa maranam'. In my life I have never seen a bhaktimaan like him. He has blessed me also with a pleasant uneventful departure from this world. As these blessings have come from a great soul like him, I am confident that he will turn out to be right. I have reached the ripe old age of ninety-five which I believe no other musician has reached.

In a brief message to the readers of 'Shanmukha' he said:

"In fact when I was invited to Mumbai, I had originally refused to come. But on being pressurized by close friends from Shanmukhananda I came here. I am very happy that the function went off very well. The Shanmukhananda Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi auditorium looks like a creation of Mayan, who was the architect of Devaloka.

"In 1933 there was the Sangeeta Sabha. Then came the Fine Arts. This was followed by the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha.

These three organizations were merged to form the present Sabha. A large number of persons, in spite of their other preoccupations have spent a lion's share of their time for the development of the Sabha to its present position of preeminence. The music world in general and the musicians in particular owe a deep debt of gratitude to these selfless workers

"At this juncture, I am reminded of the interpretation of the Dikshitar Krithi 'Sri Subramanyaya Namasthe' by the Kanchi Mahaperiyaval. It is indeed a great piece of writing. I have been associated with the Maha Periyaval since childhood. You are all aware that a Mani Mantapam is coming up in Kanchi at a cost of twelve and a half crores of rupees. I have no doubt that this project will increase the level of bhakthi in the common man. I wish to take this opportunity to bless the Shanmukhananda organization and express the hope that it will grow from strength to further strength"



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APOORVIKA

A Compendium of Rare Compositions in Karnatic Music
by V. V. Srivatsa

विद्वत्सेवा कतक निकषे वीत पङ्काशयानां
पद्माकान्तः प्रणर्यात दये दर्पणं ते स्वशास्त्रम् ।
लीला दक्षां त्वदनवसरे लाळयन् विप्रलिप्सां
माया शास्त्राण्यपि दमयितुं त्वत्प्रपन्नं प्रतिपान् ॥

Preface

The Highest Truth, the Ultimate is immutable and transcendental. The term, 'transcendental' signifies something brought about by cognition. In Kantian philosophy, transcendental cognition is called a 'priori knowledge' - meaning something which has to be experienced. Knowledge comes, apart from native intelligence or intuition, from experience, as well. Memories of pain and pleasure, agony and ecstasy, fear and fun, stemming from experience, cannot be erased from the mental plane. Non-dualism or Adwaita, holds that manifestations are unreal super-impositions, used only to facilitate perception. The Bhagavat - Gita says so, in Chapter VII, dealing with experience - Vignana Yoga :

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यते मामबुद्धयः ।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥

Unless we experience something, we shall not realise it.

Music : An Art or a Science ?

The embodiment, the manifestation of the primordial sound Nada, is called Gita. Gita is the process of sound production. Harmony in sound-production leads to Music. In Sanskrit, 'Samyak' means, to create. To create Gita is Samyak + Gita, that is Sangita. Music, an art par-excellence, is also considered a science. Vedic thought distinguished between the fourteen sciences - 'Vidyas' and sixty four

arts - 'Kalas'. Music or Sangita was known as 'Gandharva Vidya' and as 'Sangita Kala'. The Indian concept of Music was that it had two aspects - one spiritual aspect and the other, aesthetic. Science relates to intellect and art, to emotion; there are no characteristic commonalities between science and art. Science is impersonal and universal; art is personal and individual - with ample scope for originality. 'Lakshana' is the science content of music and 'Lakshya', the art of music. Lakshana is for codification and standardisation, while Lakshya is the soul of the art. Music is fundamentally an art, using scientific systems

Prof. R. Srinivasan observes

"Indian music satisfies the heart and mind and goes deeper down into realms where emotion and intellect coalesce with intuition. Its appeal is primarily to emotion, it sublimates emotions into impersonal experiences where dualities merge into a great synthesis, where joy and sorrow merge into ineffable bliss"

Spiritualism and music go in tandem

Karnatic Music Tradition

The Lalita-Sahasranama starts with the alphabet 'ka', with the Nama 'kakaara-roopa - Kalyani'. Ka is the first consonant. Musical codification follows the 'Katapayaadi' system. If you think of a geographical region between two 'Ka's, it is Karnataka. In ancient tradition the first ka alluded to River Krishna as the Northern boundary, with the second 'ka' signifying the River Kaveri as the Southern limit. While the Northern boundary has remained static, the Southern limit nowadays extends to Kanyakumari, the confluence of seas - the territory still remaining Karnataka. Music in vogue in this territory is Karnatic Music.

Indian musico-musicological tradition dates back to the Vedic period. Recorded

bifurcation of the Indian system into the Uttaraadhiya (Northern) and Daakshinaatya (Southern) or into Hindusthani and Karnatic systems dates only to the 13th century A.D. Ramamatya, Vidyaranya, Somanatha, Ahobila, Venkatamakhin, Tulajaji and Govindacharya are Lakshana-Kartas of the Karnatic tradition. Karnatic music was well insulated from exposure to Islamic influence. Hence, the pristine purity of Indian tradition is best seen in Karnatic Music. The tripods on which the Karnatic system is based are Bhava, Raga and Tala.

The term 'Bhava' encompasses Sangita Bhava and Sahitya Bhava. Sangita Bhava signifies the scope of musical expansion, like Sangatis, Neraval, Kalpana Swaras etc; while Sahitya Bhava relates to the thematic content of compositions. Matanga defines a Raga as a combination of sounds beautified by notes which thrills hearts of listeners. A Raga is an aesthetically satisfactory combination of notes, Swaras. Swaras are based on pitch, Shruti. Tala is 'Laya' - harmony in rhythm. Karnatic tradition holds Shruti as the mother and Laya as the father -

"श्रुति माता लय पिता ।"

Godhead, perceived as Devi, is described as - one who enjoys Bhava, Raga and Tala. Bhava is the life of a Raga and a Raga rendered without appropriate Bhava will only be a medley of sounds. A Raga's effect is best seen when particular phrases are emphasised. The total framework is set to rhythm - Laya. Karnatic Music is a combination of Bhava, Raga and Tala, of Bha + Ra + Ta, it is the music of Bharata.

The Trinity of Karnatic composers is identified with these aspects. Bhava is best seen in Tyagaraja's compositions, the tonal effects of Ragas are best visualised in Dikshitar's compositions; rhythmical excellence pervades Shyama Shastri's compositions.

APOORVIKA

Music, shown as an art, covers a large

time-span. Karnatic Music covers a span of six centuries. We should review our musical heritage-comprising of popular and rare compositions. This presentation is devoted to the rare - sector - compositions with rare thematic content, with rare Bhava, in rare Ragas and set to rare rhythmic patterns. Since it is composed of rare components, the title, 'APOORVIKA'.

Akin to the sixteen ritualistic offerings during worship the Shodoshopachar, we have chosen, sixteen compositions for presentation in 'Apoorvika'. Factors influencing the choice of these compositions are as follows:

i) Compositions chosen for Bhava	...	3
ii) Compositions chosen for Raga	...	5
iii) Compositions chosen for Bhava & Raga...	...	4
iv) Compositions chosen for Tala	...	2
v) Compositions chosen for Bhava & Tala	...	1
vi) Compositions chosen for Raga & Tala	...	1
		16

We have also sought to cover a wide range of Rasas - Bhakti, Roudra, Sringara, Vira, Shanta and Shoka Rasas.

First Composition:

Sri Guruguhamoorte
(Raga-Udaya Ravichandrika)

This Kriti is one of the first - series of compositions composed by Muthuswami Dikshitar - the Ashta - Vibhakti Kritis, eight in number, commencing with 'Sri Nathadi Guruguho Jayati' (Mayamalava Gowla). This composition, the last of this series is an obeissance to the perceptor, the Guru. Dikshitar expounds Adwaita - Siddhanta, the doctrine of mono-theism, so lucidly in this composition, that philosophers are amazed. The thematic content, Sahitya - Bhava, of this song is sublime.

A teacher, a guide, a Guru is one who opens an acolytes eyes to material and spiritual realities, says, Adi-Shankara:

अज्ञानर्तामिरान्धश्च ज्ञानाञ्जन शलाकयाः ।

चक्षुः उन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः ।।

Graphic and allegoric descriptions of Iswara. It's Manifestation and the lower self, the Guru, in this song, are indeed delectable. Jiva:

Yoga, the effort to attain a goal, is taught by the Guru. Ignorance, like darkness, is to be dispelled by illumination. At the start of the Yoga, this illumination is soft, not profound. The Guru sheds soft-white-light, in illustrative terms, like the moon. The moon reflects sun's rays and the Guru reflects rays of the Brahman. Please recall the passage from the Taittiriya Upanishad

सयश्चायं पुरुषे यश्चासावादित्ये स एकः ।

Dikshitar refers to the Guru's reflection of the Truth by the term:

योगिनी हृदय प्रकाश चित्त वृत्ते ।

While Yoga is the effort to seek release from ephemeral limitations, Bhoga is enjoyment which ensnares one in material traps. Bhoga has to be experienced to know its unreality - without which the superiority of Yoga is not seen. Yoga and Bhoga pervade in tandem. The Guru imparts in a concurrent manner, both Bhoga and Yoga.

युगपद् भोग योग प्रदान निपुण शक्ते

(Dikshitar)

The Guru is a great researcher into Vedic truths, one who has practised Agama, Karmic duties, to perfection. Note usage of the term 'Anusandhana' (Research)

आगम रहस्य तत्त्व अनुसन्धान युक्ते

(Dikshitar)

The Guru is the embodiment of bliss, 'Ananda - Rakta', yet, totally detached, 'Virakta', whose contact with the world is like water on a lotus leaf.

The beauty of this composition is seen from the fact that Dikshitar deals with dualistic details like Yoga and Bhoga, Chandrika and Prakasha, Rakti and Virakti in the Anupallavi, while in the Charana, he deals only with Adwaitic, non-dualistic factors.

The Guru does not distinguish between the lower self (Jiva) and at the Higher Self (Brahman); between Atman, the Truth,

आत्म ईश्वर जीव भेदावरण निवृत्ते ।

(Dikshitar)

Dikshitar echoes Shankaracharya's commentary on the Brahmasutras, in this song, in respect of the four pre-requisite qualifications needed to attain knowledge of the Truth.

उच्यते नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः

इहमुत्रफल भोग विरागः

शमदमादि साधन संपद मुमुक्षुत्वं चेति ।

(Shankaracharya)

आत्म तत्त्व शोधन साधन संपत्ते ।

(Dikshitar)

Dikshitar gives us a glimpse of the Ultimate - Truth of Sri-Vidya, integral to Adwaita, by reference to the terms (Red) and (white) in the Charana - Pravrutti of the Guru. If pure white light is broken into spectral colours, one end of the spectrum will be red. The truth is integration of the red into white.

Dikshitar's literary and philosophical genius is seen in the expression

आत्म उदय रवि चन्द्रिका संदीप्ते

On an Amavasya, the Sun and the Moon rise at the same time. Amavasya is that precise moment when the Sun and the Moon are in the same line, when viewed from the Earth. In Amavasya there is integration, only one entity (the Sun - Moon is not seen), only one Truth, only Adwaita. This is the pinnacle of Adwaita! No composer has matched this expression, indicative of the intellectual and philosophical felicity of Dikshitar.

What is there in a name? In Karnatic Music we have the same name for different Ragas. Some examples are

Bhoopala (with Sadharana Gandhara)

(9th Mela group)

Bhoopala (with Antara Gandhara)

(8th Mela group)

Kalavati (Janya of the 16th Mela)

Karavati (31st Melakarta in Venkatamakhin's scheme)

Similarly we have two versions of the Raga Udaya Ravichandrika. Tyagarajaswami's composition 'Enta Nerchina' in Raga Suddha Dhanyashi. Many hold Suddha-Dhanyashi of this song to be identical with the Raga Udaya Ravichandrika. Dhanyashi, Saveri, Bhairavi are Swara-Scales-the scale for Dhanyashi being Sa-ga-ma-pa-ni-sa. If this scale is used either in the 20th or 22nd Melakarta Raga, we will get the Raga used in the song 'Enta Nerchina'. It will be proper to give this Raga, the suffix 'Dhanyashi'. In Tyagaraja's scheme, Suddha-Dhanyashi is a derivative of the 20th Melakarta Raga. In Venkatamakhin's scheme, the same Raga is got by using the Dhanyashi scale in the 22nd Melakarta Raga. Dikshitar distinguishes between 'Suddha Dhanyashi' Raga and 'Udaya Ravichandrika' Raga. Suddha-Dhanyashi is seen in Dikshitar's "Subhramanyena Rakshitoham", a popular composition, where in the Raga-Mudra passage, he uses the words "Krittikaa Suta Shuddha Dhanyena".

Which Raga, is the correct Udaya-Ravichandrika? The Lakshana - Shloka of Raga Dhuni-Bhinna-Shadja, the 9th Melakarta, is given below

भिन्नपङ्कजाख्यं रागेयं रिषभग्रहं सम्युतः ।

सम्पूर्णः प्रथमे यामे दीनस्य परिगीयते ॥

'Prathame Yame' signifies that this is a Raga to be sung at or just before day-break, that it is an Udaya Raga. If we apply the Dhanyashi scale (sa-ga-ma-pa-ni-sa) to this Raga, we get a Raga, an Upanga Raga, which is aptly called Udaya Ravi-Chandrika. However, it will have the Kakali Nishada from the 9th Melakarta and not the Kaisiki Nishada of the 20th or 22nd Melakarta. The real Raga is one with the Kakali Nishada, not the superimposition on Suddha Dhanyashi.

The theme of Dikshitar's composition is the Brahman, the topic is Brahma-Vichara. Dikshitar refers to 'Su-Muhurte' 'good-time' in

this song. The best Muhurta for Brahma-Vichara is the Brahma-Muhurta, just before day-break. The Raga to be rendered then has to be an Udaya Raga. This Raga is Udaya Ravi Chandrika, the correct one, with the Kakali Nishada, used by Dikshitar in this composition.

Need there be further proof to establish the musical genius of Muthuswami Dikshitar?

Second Composition:

Krishnanda Mukunda (Raga-Gowlipantu)

The Krishna Cult is indigenous and not alien to Adwaita. Surdas, Mirabai, Jayadeva and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu were great Krishna-Bhaktas. Even a staunch Saivite, like Lilashuka, wrote:

शैववयं न खलु तत्र विचारणीयं

पञ्चाक्षरी जपपरा नितरां तथापि ।

चेतो मदीयं मतसि कुसुमावभासां

स्मरणं स्मरति गोपबधू किशोरम् ॥

(Though born a Saivite devoted to ceaseless incantation of Shiva's Panchakshari, my mind dwells only on Krishna)

Madhusudhana Saraswati, a pontiff of the Kamakoti-Peetha and a great Adwaitin who dealt in great detail with Nirakara-Vada, concluded his commentary with the observation that there is nothing greater than Krishna:

पूर्णं सुन्दरं मुखात् अरविन्दं नेत्रात् ।

कृष्णात्परं किमपि तत्त्वं अहं न जाने ॥

Sadashiva Brahmendra, another staunch Adwaitin, composed pieces like "Broohi Mukundeti", "Bhajare Gopalam", "Kreedati Vanamali" and "Gayati Vanamali" - which are well known.

Dikshitar belonged to this tradition. He was a Krishna-Bhakta too, though he had no 'Ishta-Devata' like Tyagaraja and Shyama Shastri.

Here again, Dikshitar's literary ability is to the fore. He uses the expression 'Trishna' (to rhyme with Krishna) to signify desires akin to a mirage. The Gopikas had no desires. One recalls the Rasa-Lila passage from the Bhagavata-Purana. The incarnation of Krishna, a Poorna-Avatara, is deemed as the ultimate Vaishnavite Form - Vasudeva. In the passage 'Yamalarjuna Bhanjana', of this song, we find an echo of Vedanta Desika's Gopala-Vimshati.

यमलार्जुनं दृष्ट्वा लालकलिं

यमुनासाक्षिकं यौवनं युवानं ।

Krishna is described as the Moon which arose from the sea of the Yadava race:

यादव वंशं पर्यानिधिं चन्द्र ।

If Rama is Ramachandra, Ravi Kula Soma, Krishna is also Krishna-Chandra. Here again, we are reminded of Vedanta Desika's magnum-opus titled 'Yadavabhyudaya'. In the Raga-Mudra passage 'Gowri-Paantha', Dikshitar alludes to Shiva, Gouri's consort. Above all, Dikshitar's stress on the 'Keshava' name in this song, reminds us of the Bhagavata-dictum:

सर्वदेव नमस्कारं केशवं प्रतिगच्छति ।

Gowlipantu is a Raga which was handled by the Trinity-Tyagaraja, Shyama Shastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar. We have four compositions by Tyagaraja - 'Mosa Pogu', 'Enta Papiniadi', 'Rama Ramakrishna' and the popular 'Tera Teeyagarada', and three by Shyama Shastri - 'Nannu Brovarada', 'Purahara Jaye' and 'Tarunam Idamma', all set to Mishra Chapu Tala, in Gowlipantu Raga. This is the solitary composition by Dikshitar.

Gowla and Gowlipantu are both derivatives of Raga Mayamalava - Gowla. Gowla and Gowlipantu have identical notes in the ascending scale, the Arohana, they being:

Sa-ri-ma-pa-ni-sa

The descending scale of Gowla Raga is:

Sa-ni-pa-ma-ri-ga-ma-ri-sa

The Gandhara-Vakra is noticeable in the Avarohana. It is the prayoga 'ri-ga-ma-ri-sa' that imparts Ranjakatva to Gowla.

Gowlipantu's Avarohana scale is

Sa-ni-pa-ma-ga-ri-sa

The Gandhara-Vakra is not implemented. The basic feature in Gowlipantu is the advent of the Prati-Madhyama in the Sanchara

pa-pa-ma-dha-ma

The drop from the pitch of Suddha Dhaivata 1.562 to the level of Suddha Madhyama, 1.333 is too steep - where Prati-Madhyama with a level of 1.406 is used instead. The use of the Prati-Madhyama in this Sanchara, echoes for a fleeting moment, Raga Pantuvarali, the Prati-Madhyama counterpart of Mayamalava-Gowla. Hence the name, Gowli-Pantu

All schools deem Gowlipantu as a Bhashanga Raga. An extraneous, Anya-svara has to be present in a Bhashanga Raga. What is the judicious limit for usage? The usage is pronounced in Tyagarajaswami's 'Terateeyaga Rada' and in Shyama Shastri's 'Tarunam Idamma'. In the Lakshana-Gita by Venkatamakhin, we find limited usage - only once in the Dhruva part and once in Javadi. We discern liberal usage in a Mattya - Tala Sanchari composed later, by Subbarama Dikshitar. Hence, the emphasis on Prati-Madhyama seems to be a latter-day development.

Dikshitar's Kiti in Raga Gowlipantu has only one passage with pronounced Prati-Madhyama usage. He has adhered to the old school of thought. Hence, the uniqueness, in musical terms, of this composition. The Lakshana - Shloka of this Raga is

सग्रहो गौडिपन्तुञ्च आरोहणध्वजितः ।

सम्पूर्णः सर्वकालेषु गीयते गायकोत्तमः ।

Note the words 'Giyate Gayakottamaihi' - this is a Raga to be rendered by exponents!

Third Composition:**Atla Balukudu
(Raga-Athana)**

Athana is an attractive and fascinating Raga which is not adequately appreciated. It is a Deshiya Raga, a Raga with a folk-music origin. It is a liberated, democratic Raga. Free use of Swaras is seen in this Bhashanga - Raga. The same Swaras appear in different forms. The Gandhara sounds as Sadharana Gandhara in some prayogas and as Antara Gandhara on other occasions. Occasionally, the Gandhara does not touch the Antara Gandhara level and ends as a Kampita Swara. Once again, the Dhaivata, a Deergha - Swara in both the Arohana and the Avarohana, touches the Kaisiki Nishada level, on some occasions. The Gamaka - form called 'Vali' is best seen in the Deergha Swaras - Gandhara and Nishada, while the Gamaka 'Jarū' is seen in between the two Nishada Swaras used.

The free use of the Kaisiki Nishada and the Kakali Nishada characterise this Raga. Which of these Nishada Swaras is important, which is integral? If Kaisiki Nishada is considered integral and Kakali Nishada as extraneous, this Raga will be a derivative of the 28th Melakarta Raga. If Kakali Nishada is taken as integral, this Raga will be a derivative of the 29th Melakarta Raga. This is a disputed matter. The doyen, Subbarama Dikshitar points out that Dhaivata, the Jiva Swara, is always used in a manner proximate to the Kaisiki Nishada, wherefore, the Kaisiki Nishada should be considered as the integral Swara. Subbarama Dikshitar upholds Venkatamakhin's classification under the 28th Melakarta scheme.

Subbarama Dikshitar declares, "The usage of many Swaras in many manners, in this Raga, renders it fit to be considered as a Sampoorana Raga rather than as a Bhashanga Raga".

Playing this Raga on the Veena is an art. When plucking for the Gandhara, one has to pull the string at Panchashruti Rishabha Sthana and then slowly descend

to Rishabha. In case of playing the Dhaivata, once again the Panchashruti Dhaivata Sthana has to be used. Subbarama Dikshitar's views on this being treated as a Sampoorana - Raga are found in the Lakshana Shloka itself.

अंगणा रागः सम्पूर्णः सग्रहः सर्वकालिकः

One great feature is the liberation - in a spiritual sense too! Some consider it as originating from Harikhamboji, the 28th Melakarta; some others consider it as a derivative of Shankarabharanam, the 29th Melakarta. Athana is Raga with derivative potentials of Hari and Shankara. It is a Raga symbolising the unity of Hari and Hara, Shankara and Narayana. A great Raga indeed!

The essential Rasas generated in rendition of Athana are Roudra Rasa and Vira Rasa. Swati Tirunal has used this Raga elegantly in portraying Srīngara with Roudra, in the Padam 'Valapu Tala Vashama'. Swati Tirumal's Kriti, "Sri Kumara Nagara" is nowadays popular. The Ata-Tala Tana Varna 'Sri Sri Maharaja Shruta' composed by Subbarama Dikshitar is seldom heard. Other unheard compositions include 'Sri Raja Raja' by Subbarama Dikshitar, 'Sarasa Dala Netra' by Kumara Edappa Maharaja and 'Palaya Parameshwari' by Krishnaswami Ayya. Dikshitar composed two songs in this Raga - "Tyagarajo Virajo" belonging to the Siva-Navavarna series, sung occasionally by Seshagopalan and the Navagraha - Kriti, "Brihaspate". Dikshitar has used many Bhashanga Ragas in the Navagraha series, will he by-pass such an important Bhashanga Raga? Never.

Tyagarajaswami's output in this Raga, to say the least, is prodigious. Of ten of his compositions in Athana, "Anupama Gunambudhi", "Ela Ni Daya Radu", Narada Gana Lola", "Ee Paapamu" and "Chede Buddhi" are well-known. "Mummurtulu" and "Kattu Jesi" are occasionally heard. The remaining three "Sripapriya", "Bhajana Seya" and "Atla Balukudu" are rarely heard.

"Atla Balukudu" reflects the anger and disappointment in Tyagarajaswami's mood. The composer pleads helplessness at the unpredictability of Rama - who Tyagaraja says, is capable of both rocking the cradle and of pinching the child therein. Rama can punish wrong-doers (*Dushta-Nigraha*) by destroying them and grant longevity to good persons (*Shishta-Paripalana*). Which way will he go, in respect of me? - Tyagaraja wonders. However, Rama all-knowing, all-pervasive, knows what is best. So, it will be prudent to surrender unto Him. Tyagaraja declares Rama as the dividend for devotees, as Bhakta-Bhagadheya. This composition relates to the doctrine of Surrender to Divine Grace, better known as the 'Saranagati Tatva'.

Musical grace, filigree-nuances, Sangita Bhava apart, this composition also portrays the grandeur of Vilamba-Kala, of slow-tempo.

Fourth Composition:**Dalachinavaaru
(Raga-Dhanyashi)**

Dhanyashi, as mentioned earlier, is not a mere Raga - it is a musical scale. When this scale is applied to different Melakarta Ragas, different Ragas are extracted. Thus, we have Dhanyashi, Suddha Dhanyashi, Maruva-Dhanyashi etc. The term 'Dhanyashi' is normally synonymous with the derivative of an Upanga Raga of the 8th Melakarta Raga.

Differences of opinion are the bane of Karnatic Music. Each school of thought insists that its views are right. For example, Venkatamakhin takes a tangential stand that Dhanyashi is a Bhashanga-Raga of the 20th Melakarta Raga, Natabhairavi, with Suddha-Rishabha as the Anya-Swara in it. Subbarama Dikshitar, in all fairness, disagrees with Venkatamakhin's views and favours classification as an Upanga Raga of the 8th Melakarta.

This is an ancient Raga with several textual references:

धन्यासी औडवः प्रोक्तः सावरी धनिर्वर्जितः
कैशिकी ललितश्चैव धन्यासी च कुरङ्गिका

(Sangita Makaranda)

धन्यासिका प्रभातेऽसौ षड्जत्रितय मण्डिता ।
रिधहीना रसे वीरे गीयते गायकोत्तमैः ।

नीलोत्पल श्यामल मूर्तिरेषा प्रियं

लिखन्ति विरहेण युक्ता

श्रीखण्ड चर्चा विलसत्कुचास्या

- धन्यासिका भाति मनोजवेषा ।

(Rasakowmudi)

हनुमर्ताडिमेलोच्च जातो धन्यासीनामकं
सन्ध्यासं सांशकं चैव षड्जग्रहमुच्यते ।

(Samgraha - Choodamani)

धन्यासीदेशिदेशारण्या रागाङ्गाणि त्रयोदशः ।

(Sangita Ratnakara)

References are also found in the Swara-Mela Kalanidhi and Sangita-Chandrodaya as well as some more in the Sangita-Ratnakara. Curiously, the Sangita-Ratnakara lists only Rishabha as the Varja Swara in the Arohana! It would then be a Shadava - (Arohana) Raga!

This Tristhayi Raga permits the use of both Deergha and Kampita forms for the Jiva Swaras - Gandhara and Nishada. One can dwell long in Sanchara with Panchama as the Nyasa Swara. Some delectable Swara-Prayogas are

ni - sa - pa - ni - ma - pa - a Rakti Prayoga
and

pa - ni - sa - dha - pa - a Vishesha
Prayoga

This Raga is a Moorchanakaraka Raga - its Nishada Moorchana by Graha Bedha will be Salaga-Bhairavi. This Raga is considered

'Mangalakara' or auspicious and the basic Rasa generated is Bhakti-Rasa or devotion. This Raga is widely used in dance, dramas, in rendition of Shlokas, Vruttas and Padyas. Dhanyashi, verily, is a legacy of the past.

Annasami Shastri, the grand-son of the illustrious Shyama-Shastri composed just twelve songs - all of which are held in high esteem by the cogniscenti. 'Dalachinavaru' is one of these twelve, composed in Raga Dhanyashi.

Fifth Composition:

Onde - Koogalate
(Raga-Kalyani)

The present day state of Karnataka is the land between the Krishna and the Kaveri, yet a part of the geographical boundaries of the Karnataka conceived in the term, Karnatic Music. The contribution of Kannadiga - composers has been profound and prolific, most significant amongst them being that by the Haridasa lineage. Haridasas were the best examples of combining Bhakti and Sangita, devotion and music. Right from Narahari Teertha onwards, we have a Haridasa - Parampara, comprising of Sripadaraya (1422-1488), Vyasaraaya (1447-1539) Sangita-Pitamaha Purandaradasa (1484-1564), Raghavendra Swami (1600-1671), Vijaya Dasa (1673-1735), Gopaladasa (1721-1762) and Jagannatha Dasa (1728-1800). Indeed, it is a pity that this lineage terminated two centuries ago. Tyagarajaswami's respect for the Haridasas is well-known, as can be seen in the Kriti "Haridaasulu Vedale".

Tyagaraja, in his Abheri-Raga Kriti, "Nagumomu Ganaleni", composed a passage in the Charana:

"Kagha Raajuniyaanadi vinivega chanaledo
Gagananikilaku bahudooram baninado".

(Did the king of the birds, Garuda, come (carrying you) at great speed only to show the infinite distance between the Earth and your abode, the Vaikunta?)

Reference here, is to the episode of Gajendra-Moksha. The answer to this question posed by Tyagarajaswami can be found in a Devaranama composed by Sri Purandaradasa. Vaikunta, the Abode of the Lord, was not remote for Purandaradasa. It was only one call away - "Onde Koogalate", which is "Koopidu Dooram" in Tamil.

Kulashekara Maharaja, author of 'Mukundamala' conducts a mock-trial, holding the Lord capable of saving his devotees but guilty of discrimination towards him. He summons six witness to testify that the Lord appeared to protect them, no sooner they beckoned Him once - the six witnesses being Prahlada, Vibhishana, Gajendra, Draupadi, Ahalya and Dhruva.

वात्सल्याद भयप्रदान समयात्

आर्ताति निर्वापणात्

आदर्यादघशोषणात् अगणितः

श्रेयः पदः प्रापणात् ।

सेव्य श्रीपतिरेक एव सततं

सन्यत्र षट्साक्षिणः

प्रह्लादच्य विभीषणच्य करिराट्

पाञ्चाल्यहल्यात् ध्रुवः ॥

A similar theme is found in Purandaradasa's Devaranama. His expression "Tarala Prahlaadage Kambadindali Ninda" reminds us of the fortune of that pillar, which 'gave birth' to the Lord, the expression used by Vedanta Desika being:

महाऽसूर ग्रह स्थूणा पितामहा भूता

Purandaradasa needs no praise - no introduction. He is the "Pitaamaha", the Grand Sire of Karnatic Music. There are in vogue, at least twenty-six Devaranamas, set to Khanda-Ata Tala. Shyama Shastri has composed a Varna 'Sami Rammanave' (Anandabhairavi) in Khanda-Ata and a Mangala-Kriti, 'Shankari Shankari' (Kalyani), set to this Tala. Muthuswami Dikshitar

composed three Khanda-Ata Tala Kriti in Khambhoji Raga alone - "Kamalaambikaayai" (Navavarna), "Kashi Vishveshvaraaye" and "Sri Valmikalingam". This linkage between Khambhoji and Khanda Ata Tala is inexplicable. The fourth Kriti, in Raga Pharaz, is the Navagraha Kriti, "Sri Shukra Bhagavantam".

Surprisingly, we do not find any Kriti composed by Tyagarajaswami in Ata Tala. A paradox, indeed!

Karnataka contributed through other composers like Kanakadasa and in recent times, through Seshanna, Sadashiva Rao, Lingappa, Mysore Vasudevachar and even Kuvempu. Really speaking, Muthaiah Bhagavatar belongs to Mysore. The lofty thematic content and the laya-structure motivate the inclusion, the choice of 'Onde Koogalate' in the Apoorvika-Series. □

(To be continued...)

D. K. Pattammal speaks :

'We cannot perceive now much significant difference between the styles of various musicians except for differences in voice and technique. In our time, each sang differently.

Chembai	His golden voice reverberated across the hall with purity
Vaidyanatha	His musical resonance and inimitable sense of humor infected the audience.
Bhagavatar	
Musiri Subramania Ayyar	Slow tempo and emotion-charged raga rendition incomparable
Madurai Mani Ayyar	Unique combination of janta and datu swara prayogas, his forte was highly imaginative swara combinations.
Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar	Famous for his ability to mesmerize listeners with his musical magic. Had extraordinary imagination with a lovely voice. Used to receive thunderous cheers
G.N.B.	Had a great following, hero-worshipping his briga style clarity in incredible speed
Mudikondan Venkatarama Ayyar	A pallavi singer par excellence. Quite aptly revered as a vidwan with theoretical and practical knowledge
Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar	Revered by all of us as the author of the architectures of modern day concert. Adept in madyamakala
M. S. Subbulakshmi	There is restraint in everything she attempts. Golden voice, a God's gift.
M. L. Vasantakumari	Great imagination
Brinda & Mukta	Purity of style. In handling padams unsurpassed

These colleagues of mine are in the forefront of the musical world because they had their own original individual style, what we call bani.

(Continued "Yet Another Garland"
by Shri N. Rajagopalan)

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TRAIL-BLAZER 'BARD' OOTHUKKADU VENKATASUBBIAR*

by Dr. Sulochana Rajendran

"Venkatasubbaier, who is believed to have lived in the latter part of the 17th century, was a great Vaggeyakara of the order of the Music Trinity" said Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer in his "Commendation" [Paaraattu] to a recently published *Uttukkadu Venkatasubbier's Kamakshi Navavarana Krithis* [A Study of Sahitya] by S. Sankaranarayanan. That certainly is a 'precious utterance', coming as it does from the senior most, ripe-old titan of the music fraternity who is hailed by one and all as the Bhisma Pithamaha of Karnatic music.

Venkata Kavi, as the bard of Oothukkadu has been familiarly referred to, has been an "inspired soul on fire", a prolific composer in terms of variety and range of compositions, in use of Ragas and Talas, aesthetic beauties and articulate embellishments - in short, a mystic trail-blazer; but one who has been denied his due in the lineage of "Musical Greats".

Born to Ramachandra Vathular and Kamala Narayani at Mannargudi, Venkata Kavi's period is anywhere between the latter half of the 17th century and early 18th century that heralded in the words of the eminent musicologist R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar, "the Crimson Dawn" prior to the Golden Era and "a prologue to the approaching symphony", Venkata Kavi belonged to the post-Tulsidas period as evidenced from his own Naatai Saptaratna Kriti, *Bhajanamruta Paramananda*. [Tulsidas's was first half of 17th century.] Some sources say Kavi's life-span was 1700-1765. It is recorded that when he died Syama Sastri, the eldest of the Music Trinity, was three years old.

But it was not until the latter half of the 20th century that some of Venkata Kavi's creation surfaced. *Raasa Ganam*, his compositions on his Ishta Devata, Krishna, was all that the people heard of then. Much

more was lying dormant. There was a certain hesitancy - for what reason one does not know - in bringing to light the treasure the mystic bard had bestowed on the music world. Even stalwarts like T. V. Subba Rao and Palladam Sanjeevi Rao, who in the 'seventies' wondered how the music world missed "such a rare treasure all these years", did nothing beyond lip service.

Perhaps the age Venkata Kavi belonged to predominantly being of the Bhajana Sampradaya and the profusion of rhythmic lilt in his creations led musicologists and historians sideline him from mainstream Vaggeyakaras. Another reason could be lack of recorded evidence that was a main handicap with the pre-Trinity period. All that has come to us is from Karna-Parampara that is oral tradition. And like many other creative geniuses of this tradition, Venkata Kavi's compositions are the only "living" evidence of his genius.

A Naishtika Brahmachari, he was a recluse, a Bhakta, who poured his devotion in songs of ecstasy and agony. He learnt from none [save at the initial stage] nor taught any. He was an Ekalavya. He sang in solitude and composed in trance. A Nagaswara Vidwan, Rudra Pasupati, learnt them on the sly and brought them to light. We also learn that his elder brother, Kattu Krishniar, noted down some and passed on to his scions through his daughter. R. R. Ayyangar records that Kavi's songs were all preserved in palm-leaf bundles kept in earthen pots and passed on through seven generations. And it was given to Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar [of the 6th generation] and the popular Oothukkadu Brothers - Muthukrishnan and Rajagopalan [of the 7th generation] to propagate the bard's compositions in their full-fledged glory.

The music world may have sidelined

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him, hesitating to put him in par with the Music Trinity till Semmangudi came out forthright, as mentioned earlier. But his songs, their structure, musical finesse reveal more than what records formally convey.

One thing that can certainly be said from his creations was that he kept the chain of Bhajana Sampradaya unbroken, while at the same time contributing profusely to the great classical tradition that was evolving into a fine classical art. In fact, Venkata Kavi strengthened the link in the classical tradition between the medieval and the modern following Purandara Dasa.

That the Kavi was by all means a product of his times goes without saying. The pre-Trinity era saw many composers of Bhagavatha tradition and art music was enriching the music stream. If on the one hand, Purandara Dasa's *Devarnamas*, Arunagirinathar's *Tiruppugazh*, Narayana Thirtha's *Tarangams*, Kshetragna's *Padams* augmented by hymns of Maharashtra saints, (popularised by Keertankars who had migrated to Tanjavur with Maratha rulers) and Tulsidas's *Ramcharitmanas*, brought about an emotional Bhakti surge, the quality of the art music, on the other, reached a new high on the classical front with stalwarts like Merattur Veerabhadrayya, Govindasamayya, Kasinathayya, Margadarshi Sesha Iyengar and Pachimiriam Adiyappaiah, to mention only a few, enhancing the facets of Manodharma Sangeetha. Venkatamakhi's Melakarta scheme opened the floodgates of melody to fertilize musical soil through various Raga channels.

Needless to say that Venkata Kavi who was born during the abovementioned period would have been influenced by these developments and has thus availed of all these in his outpourings. So much for the historical background.

A study of Venkata Kavi's creations reveal that they covered a variety of forms of compositions, such as, Varnam, Kriti, Samudaya Kriti [like Sapta Ratnas and Nava Varnas], Ragamalika, Padam, Javali, Tillana, Periya Purana Keerthana, Ashtakam,

Virutham, Kalyana Pattu, Chindu etc. He handled Ragas of a wide range handling Ghana, Naya, Rakti, Desya and ancient Tamil Panns. There were rare ragas like Rasamanjari, Hamsakeervani, Lalitha Gandharvam, Kannadamaruvam etc. Amrutavarshini, Umabharanam and Manji figure in his compositions. So does Puraneermai and Takkesi of ancient Tamil Panns.

He was at ease with any Tala. Khanda Dhruva, Khanda Matya, Sankeerna Matya flowed as easily as Adi in his compositions. Similarly in handling Sangathis, Solkattu Swaras, Swaraksharas, Gati-bhedas, Kalai-bhedas, he was master-supreme. He was also a master-spinner of Lakshana in Lakshya. His songs abound in Alankaras, 'Adukku' swaras, and other aesthetic subtleties such as Dwitiyakshara, Antyakshara Prasas, Yati Prasthara etc.

In fact, very few know what a wealth of information [Nidhi] Venkata Kavi's compositions contain regarding the history and evolution of the art and scenario of music of his times. One could perceive in them a fusion of Bhakti Yoga, Gnana Yoga, and Nada Yoga. Verily, Venkata Kavi opens up an entire gamut of musical evolution for researchers to explore. For every level of probe he has something to offer.

Venkata Kavi's Ishta Devata was no doubt Krishna; nevertheless, he composed on other deities too like Ganesha, Shiva, Rama, Muruga, Devi Kamakshi and so on. Some of the compositions on these deities are unique in perception, philosophy and structure, revealing his depth of vision and ingenuity in composing.

His compositions have many qualities, facets and features which lend ample scope for improvisation and imaginative choreography, while at the same time being flexible enough for simple rendition. Some of them are concert-worthy, some ideal for dance and some are suited for congregational singing [Bhajana]. When sung in chorus they have their own charm and appeal. When rendered solo, they bring a thrill and ecstasy

to the singer and listener and when danced, their inherent lilt and visual appeal enhance the musical beauty and add a new dimension.

There is, of course, a general impression that there is a profusion of lyrics in Venkata Kavi's compositions which leave little room for improvisation. One should not however overlook the fact that singing them properly and perfectly itself would be an elevating experience as it requires precision of diction, breath control, rhythmic grip and voice power. Just miss a syllable, you will go astray. The Tamil saying, *Karanam Tappinaal Maranam* is very relevant here. And one requires a proper Guru to learn them from. If one can meditate in music, this is an ideal source.

We may now enumerate a few illustrations regarding the Kavi's genius:

- 1) **Pada Varnam** : *Udupala Vada* (Abheri)
- 2) **Keerthana** : *Padmavathi Ramanam* (Purvi Kalyani) - a salutation to Jayadeva. It has a historical significance of adopting Ashtapadi in Karnatic Bhajans.
- 3) **Kritis** :
 - (i) He has composed various types on many deities. On Ganesha alone, there are many but none could excel *Ananda Nartana Ganapathim Bhavaye* (Naatai). It depicts Ganesha's ecstasy in response to Shiva-Parvathi's dance contest. Composed in Samashti Charanam, the song lilt in Solkattu Swaras, which is unparalleled. Besides, the music employs 'Archika Gana' of one-note sequence, Swarakshara and Atita Eduppu which testify to his historical perception, musical aesthetics and rhythmic intricacies.
 - (ii) In his devotion to Muruga there is no comparison to the Kriti *Nimringun Arul Kattun* (Bilahari) wherein the Kavi attributes Seven abodes (Padarvedu) as against the customary six to the Lord, the seventh being his own heart! Suited for both concert and dance exposition.
 - (iii) For an Ekalavya, his "Guru Keerthanas", numbering 14 in simple Tamil is touching. They are in Ragas as varied as Takkesi, Devamanohari, Malayamarutham, Kharaharapriya, Chamaram etc.
 - (iv) Tyagaraja is generally hailed as the architect of Sangathis. But Venkata Kavi was no less a sangathi builder.

Take, for instance, *Kalyana Rama* (Hamsanadam). The Kriti in 2 Kalai bristles with Raga-Sahitya-Bhava based Sangathis (may well be compared to Tyagaraja's *Darini Telusukonti-Suddha Saveri*). One of the Charanas, *Agatha Suravara* yields itself to Yati Prasthara, in rendition. What perhaps has been left for improvisation here, we see concretised in

Dikshitar's Kriti structure itself e.g., *Tyagaraja Toga Vabhavam* (Ananda Bhairavi).

Kalyanarama is a selector's choice for vachan with Alapana and Kalpanaswaras.

- (v) Kritis of Samashti Charanam as well as those with Pallavi, Anupallavi, Charanam with Madhyama Kala Sahitya. Gati stances, delving into Gati-bheda and Solkattu Swaras are many. A few examples: *Brindavana Nilaye* (Ritigowla), *Muthukrishna memudam* (Senghuruti) and *Vitasamayavopada* (Vasanta) - the last is used to open the Gokulashruti Festival. The first two are used in dance too.
- (vi) Kritis with Madhyamakala Sahitya in Pallavi and Anupallavi and Charanas in varying Gathis: *Mahashaya Hrudaya* (Abhogi).
- (vii) Kritis equally good for concert, dance and Bhajana: *Marakathamamaya Chela* (Vilambi) and *Ranganathamamam* (Naatun). A unique feature in the latter is that the Solkattu Swara passages have Sahitya like the dance Swarajathi compositions.
- (viii) **Samudaya Kritis** - Venkata Kavi's magnificent edifices - *Saptaratna* and *Nayavarana* Kritis. Their similarities to *Pancharatnam* of Tyagaraja and *Nayavarana* of Dikshitar are so apparent in structure that it could not have been mere coincidence.

The influence of the Kavi on the Trinity is quiet apparent. Taking, for instance, the *Uttama* Jathi, the Tana Varna pattern with Anubandham is followed by both Venkata Kavi and Tyagaraja. While Kavi composed in both Ghana and Rakti Ragas such as Kiravam, Madhyamavathi and Pharaz, Tyagaraja composed in the traditional Ghana Panchakam.

If one analyses their Naatun Ratnas, many similarities in structure and substance could be found, especially in the Dhatsu of Anupallavi and Charanas 1 and 3 of both. 7th of Kavi and 10th of Tyagaraja. Perhaps the liberal use of 'Alankaras' - Dhanda and Dhattu Swaras by the Kavi and more sophisticated Swara Korvais of Tyagaraja were indicative of the state of evolution of music in their respective times. Besides, the Sahitya (Mata) had much to do with the Dhatsu. *Bhajanamrita*, in fact, has been Kavi's Guru Vandana Kriti too. The 7th Charana, *Shiva Hara Sharavama* spells the birth period of the Kavi; here he salutes all the 'Sangita Bhaktas' starting from Vageesha upto Tulsidas, including Nayanaaras and Alvars.

This Ratna has been compared with Tyagaraja's 'Su Raga Pancharatnam' too as both mention about devotees of the Lord - Sanaka, Sanandana, Narada, Anjaneya (Pavanasunu-Sameeyi, Giridrita), Prahlada, (Kanakakasipusuta) and the like. Could Tyagaraja have included Venkata Kavi too in his *Endura Mahamubhavulu Antariki Vindanamam*?

Kavi dedicates two 'Ratnas' to Lord Shiva, one in Tamil, *Alavedennaulo Shrivane* (Pharaz), the other in Sanskrit *Jhataadithara Shankara Deva Deva* (Todi). In the Tamil Ratna he hails all the Shaivite Bhaktas and humbly beseeches that he too be blessed as one among

them-*Innavaral Oruvartippol*. This 'Ratna' is also mentioned as a *Periapurana Keerthanai* in an earlier edition.

The Saptaratnas are

- 1) *Bhajanamrita* - Naatai
9 Charanas & Anubandham
- 2) *Aganta Mahimaathibhutaaleka* - Gowla
7 Charanas & Anubandham
- 3) *Alayademaale* - Dhuraz
6 Charanas & Anubandham
- 4) *Halasarasa Mohali* - Kiravam
6 Charanas & Anubandham
- 5) *Bhavadhara* - Todi -
4 Charanas & Anubandham
- 6) *Mudhava Hemu Kelu* - Kalyani
5 Charanas & Anubandham
- 7) *Sandara Nanda Kumara* - Madhyamavathi
8 Charanas & Anubandham

All are set to Adi Tala. Besides *Saptaratnas* Venkata Kavi composed an *Anjaneya Pancharatna* in which figures a rare Raga, *Rasamanjari*.

The other monumental pieces are *Navavarana Kritis*. Here many varieties of Ragas are used and the Kavi excels in the use of complex Talas.

Navavarana Kritis are musical compositions of great import. Venkata Kavi's are on Kamakshi of Kanechepuram, as embodied in the Sri Chakra. They have a plan, a perception, a concept very comprehensive. *Sixidya Upasana* needs a lot of meditation and even reaching the Bindu, the central point, is not easy. In a set of 14 Kritis, all in Sanskrit, one evoking Ganesha, a Dhyana Kriti followed by 11 Avarana Kritis in which two are composed in dual structure, as for lyrics and Tala and a concluding piece, the Kavi has left an invaluable legacy. They contain all details - Tantrik and Mantrik, the name of the Chakra, the group of Shaktis, Mudra Devatas, the Chakresvari, the group of Yoginis etc.

The Navavaranas are

1. *Sri Ganeshvarah* - Shanmukhapriya
- Adi
- Invocation
2. *Tanchasi Yadi Kushalam* - Kalyani
- Adi
- Dhyana

3. *Santatom Ahum Seva* - Bilahari
- Adi
- 1st Avarana
4. *Bhajasva Sri* - Nadanamakriya
- Adi
- 2nd Avarana
5. *Sarvajeeva Davapure* - Suddha Saveri
- Adi
- 3rd Avarana
6. *Yoga Yogeshwari* - Ananda Bhairavi
- Khanda Tripita
- 4th Avarana
7. *Nilalolita Ramani* - Balahamsa
- Khanda Dhruva
- 5th Avarana
8. *Sadanandamayi* - Hindolam
- Sankeerna Matya
- 6th Avarana
9. *Sadanandamayi* (Alternate Kriti)
- Hindolam
- Khanda Matya
- 6th Avarana
10. *Sakalaloka Nayike* - Arabhi
- Adi
- 7th Avarana
11. *Sankari Sri* - Madhyamavathi
- Adi
- 8th Avarana
12. *Natapana Kalpavalli* - Punnagavari
- Adi
- 9th Avarana
13. *Sri Chakra Matangini* (Alternate Kriti)
- Suruti
- Adi
- 9th Avarana
14. *Haladharamangam* - Manranga
- Adi
- Concluding Song (Phalasruti)

Navavarana Kritis present many a characteristic feature of Kavi's creative genius. Besides including ancient, rare, Ragas and set to complex Talas in Vilamba-Kala, they contain certain structural variations not usually seen in compositions encompassing such serious themes and of such magnitude. For instance, the Dhyana Kriti, *Tanchasi Yadi Kushalam* (Kalyani) has Chittaswara in addition to Madhyamakala Sahitya. The 2nd Avarana Kriti *Bhajasva Sri* (Nadanamakriya) is said to be similar to Dikshitar's *Kamulamba Jayam* (Ahum). The 6th Avarana Kriti *Sadanandamayi* (Hindolam) in Sankeerna Matya Tala is in 2 Kalai upto Anupallavi; the Charanam moves on in 1 Kalai returning to 2 Kalai in the Madhyamakala Sahitya finale smoothly dovetailing into the opening refrain. There is an intonation of *Gathika* form also at places. Over and above,

the Kriti resembles the Dhrupad style. Had the Kavi any interaction with the Hindustani musicians? Or was it instinctive and intuitive?

Only in the 8th Avarana Kriti, *Sankari Sri Rajarajeswari* (Madhyamavathi) has the Kavi used the Swanama Mudra - "Venkata Kavi". One more instance where this stamp is used is the Ramayana Ragamalika which bristles with "Antya Prasa".

- (ix) Venkata Kavi's **Padams** exude a charm all their own. He was adept in the *Natya Sastra*, as is evidenced in his Padams, with Nayaka - Nayika Bhava most suited for dance.

A few examples:

Endavidamagithum Nandamukundanai Nee
Inda Vazhi Varum Vagai Paradi - (Kambhoji)

Avaraga Varivaro Varamattar - Idil
Adisayam Eimadi Anname - Kannan - (Saraswati)
Aakkapporuthavarku Arapporukkamal
Avasarappadalamo Idu Tagumo? - (Kambhoji)
(this depicts his Vatsalya Bhava)

Many of the popular Kritis like *Paalvadiyum Un Mugam* (Natakurunji), *Alai Payude* (Kanada), *Asaindadum* (Simhendramadhyamam), to mention a few, are bracketed with Padams, as the compositions of the pre-Trinity period are generally called. But their classical potential and eutcheri-worthiness is beyond doubt.

- (x) *Madananga Mohana* (Khamas) a **Javali** and *Purancernai Tillana* are two outstanding pieces of their genre. There is a rare "Kalinga Nartana - Natangam", which appears to be a blend of Tillana

and Daru Varnam. More light needs to be thrown on this form.

- (xi) Kavi's **Ragamalikas** too are a precious treasure, as is the Ramayana Ragamalika. *Sri Rama Jayam* is a Ghana Panchakam with a difference in that Sri Raga is substituted by Manranga. The piece is unsurpassed as a poem in simple Tamil with bristling Antya Prasa. The others are *Ippadiyum Oru Pillai* in Jhampa Tala, *Etta Arandi, Kandam Kanadadu*.

- (xii) **Panchakam** and **Ashtakam** in Sloka form further enrich the Kavi's creations. *Madhava Panchakam*, *Nrisimha Panchakam*, *Sri Ranganatha Panchakam*, *Kalinga Nartana Prabham*, *Dhenuswasapuram Mangalashthakam* are soul-stirring.

Dhenuswasapuram (where the divine cow Kamadhenu is said to have had Darshan of Kalinga Nartana Krishna with Rukmini after its release from the curse - and also denotes its sigh of relief) is another name for Oothukkadu, the jungle of fountains. No wonder, the fertile soil also flourished with the fountain springs of music from the Kavi, covering the vast musical stream, and included marriage songs (*Rukmini Kalyana Vaibhogame*) or the Kurathi folk song and Chindu.

Is there any variety the Kavi had left? It can truly be said that what the Kavi has left untouched in the field of classical music is not worthy of any reference! □



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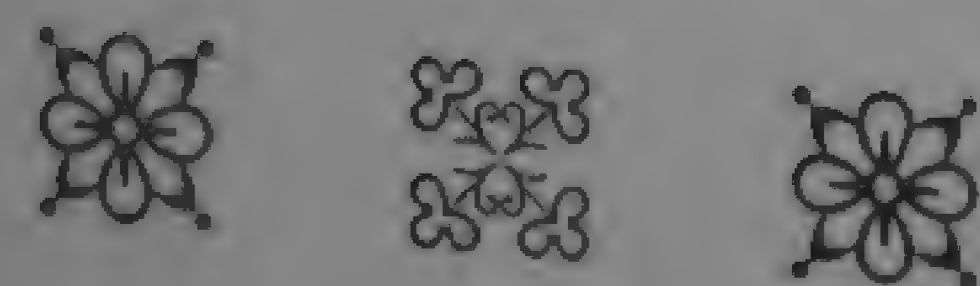
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CARNATIC COMPOSERS OF THE POST-TRINITY PERIOD

by P. N. Krishnamoorthy

Over the millenea, Indian music had developed as a single system of music until about the thirteenth century. Since then it has split into two similar but distinct systems - the Hindustani music of North India and the Carnatic system of the South. Purandara Dasa (1484-1564) can be said to be the principal founder of the Carnatic system as we know it today. The creator of innumerable compositions, many of which are in vogue even today. Purandara Dasa made a most significant contribution by codifying the teaching of the elements of Carnatic music in various graded steps. These teaching methods have also survived over the centuries and are being followed even today by all teachers of Carnatic music. The next significant development was in the seventeenth century when Venkatomaki formulated the system of the seventytwo melakarta ragas. Before Purandara Dasa there were composers of the eminence of Jayadeva (twelfth century), whose immortal compositions continue to enjoy a pride of place in our repertoire even today, and Thallapaka Annamacharya whose compositions play an important role in Carnatic music.

forties and fifties. Furthermore he died very young, at the age of thirty three. It is astonishing that during his brief life, he was able to compress work and achievements that would have taken a lesser man many decades. He was an innovative administrator, a master of thirteen languages and a great composer whose eminence can be bracketed with that of the musical Trinity. More than three hundred of his compositions have been listed in various languages - principally in Sanskrit as also in Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu and Hindi. Many of these songs are widely sung and form an important element of the present day Carnatic repertoire. Tiger Varadachariar said this of Swati Thirunal - 'The royal composer combines in his style the elegance of Thyagaraja with the grandeur of Muthuswamy Dikshithar'.

Pallavi Gopala Iyer (circa 1790) was an eminent composer with a number of varnams and krithis to his credit. These include the well known Ata thala varnam 'Vanajakshi' in Kalyani and a Krithi in the same raga 'Needhu Charana' made famous by M. S. Subbulakshmy.

Subbaraya Sastry (1803-1862) was the second son of the illustrious Syama Sastry and was a disciple of Thyagaraja. He had the unique distinction of having had his tutelage under each of the Trinity. He was a gifted composer of Kirthanas and swarajathis in the style of Thyagaraja. His compositions include 'Ninnuvina' in Kalyani, 'Janani' in Reethigaula and 'Venkatasaila' in Hamirkalyani.

After the above developments, the truly golden age of Carnatic music can be said to have commenced in the eighteenth century, mainly resulting from the contributions of Thyagaraja and his contemporaries Muthuswamy Dikshithar, Syama Sastry and Swati Thirunal. Since their time, the Carnatic music world has seen a spate of composers, the most outstanding amongst them being Papanasam Sivan whose compositions in Tamil have added considerably to the scope and range of Carnatic music. Presented below are brief thumb-nail sketches of Composers in the post Trinity period.

Although he belonged to the same period as the Trinity, **Swati Thirunal** (1813-1846) was born when the Trinity were in their

Gopalakrishna Bharathi is rightly described as the father of Tamil music renaissance and modern Tamil opera. His most famous opera was 'Nandanar Charithram' and his many compositions which are still in vogue because of their musical and poetic excellence, include 'Varugalamo' in Manji, 'Eppo Varuvaro' in Jonpuri and 'Natanamadinar' in Vasantha.

Vedanayakam Pillai (1826-1889) was

a Catholic by birth who turned out to be a very fine composer in Carnatic music. His krithis in Tamil are so worded that they could be applicable to any religion. Many of his krithis are popular even today.

Ramaswamy Sivan (1839-1897) and his brother **Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer** (1844-1893) were a happy combination. Whereas the former composed the sahithyas - as for example the "Periya Purana Kirthanas", the latter who was a brilliant performer-cum-composer, set them to music. Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer also composed among others the Khambhoji varnam 'Pankajakshipai', the Janaranjani piece 'Pahimam Sri' and the seventy two melakartha ragamalika which has been justly characterised as the pride of Carnatic music.

Patnam Subramanya Iyer (1845-1902) has been described as an all-time great Carnatic musician and composer. He was called *chinna* or little Thyagaraja for the remarkable excellence of his compositions. He composed about a hundred pieces including thana varnams, pada varnams, krithis, javalis and thillanas. They include 'Neepadamule' in Bhairavi, 'Ninnu Joochi' in Saurashtram 'Marivere' in Shanmugapriya and the varnams 'Era Napai' in Thodi, 'Evari Bhodhana' in Abhogi and 'Valachi Vachi' the Navaragamalika varnam.

Mysore Vasudevachar (1865-1961) was a pupil of Patnam Subramanya Iyer who did his master proud by making great contributions to Carnatic music. He composed nearly two hundred songs, quite a number of which were top notch. 'Brochevarevarura' in Khamas and 'Palukavemina' in Devamanohari are two of his more popular compositions.

Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar (1867-1919) was another sishya of Patnam Subramanya Iyer who added considerable lustre to his master by becoming a famous composer and musician himself. He composed about hundred pieces which included varnams such as 'Ninnu Kori' in Mohanam and 'Nera Nammi' in Kanada and brilliant krithis such as 'Parama Pavanarama' in Poorvikalyani

and 'Saraguna Palimpa' in Kedaragaula. He also composed javalis, thillanas and ragamalikas.

Kotiswara Iyer (1870-1936) was another well known composer in Tamil who composed about two hundred pieces. His seventy two melakartha krithis have ensured eminence for him as a composer.

Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar (1877-1945) was another outstanding composer with more than four hundred compositions to his credit. They are in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada.

Tiruvotriyur Thyagayyar (1845-1917) was the son of Vina Kuppiyer, who was a disciple of Thyagaraja. He composed thana varnams, ragamalikas and krithis. His compositions which included the evergreen varnams 'Inthamodi' in Saranga, 'Karunimpa' in Sahana and 'Chalamela' in Durbar are replete with raga bhava.

Papanasam Sivan (1890-1973) has been rightly named the architect of Tamil musical renaissance. He composed about two thousand songs in about seventy five ragas. His compositions were mostly in Tamil and a few in Sanskrit. Sivan's compositions were born of devotion and many of them are object lessons for the adage that krithis elucidate the raga bhava in Carnatic music. Some examples of this are 'Karthikeya' and 'Kadaikkan' in Thodi and 'Kapali' and 'Mayilvahana' in Mohanam. Many of his compositions have been and continue to be the delight of musicians and audiences alike. He earned the sobriquet 'Tamil Thyagaraja' from no less a person than the eminent vocalist Simizhi Sundaram Iyer. He undoubtedly deserves to be placed among the pre-eminent composers of Carnatic music.

Andavan Pichai (1899-1990) is widely accepted as having become a composer through divine intervention. She had no formal education of any sort and still her songs glitter with alliteration and metre, rhythm and melody. Her songs were in Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit.

Periasamy Thooran is another well

known composer whose songs are very popular. He has more than one hundred and seventy songs to his credit. An outstanding composition of his is 'Muruga Muruga' in Saveri.

G. N. Balasubramaniam (1910-1965) popularly known as GNB, is one of the most prominent composers of this century. He has nearly two hundred and fifty compositions in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu to his credit. The ragas Chandrahasta, Sivashakti and Amrutha Behag are some of his creations.

Jaya Chamaraja Wodeyar (1919-1974) was a royal composer from Mysore who had nearly hundred compositions to his credit. He used rare ragas such as Durvanki ('Gam Ganapathe'), Prathapavarali ('Puribhogyalahari') and Bhogavasanthi ('Amba Sri').

M. D. Ramanathan (1923-1984) was one of the finest musicians we have known. He was also a composer of considerable prowess who composed pieces in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil. A typical composition of his is 'Sagara Sayana' in Bageshri.

Balamurali Krishna is another composer and musician of the current generation, who has more than three hundred krithis, varnams and thillanas to his credit. He has also composed songs in Sanskrit and Telugu in all the seventy two melakartha ragas.

Thulaseevanam and **Srivatsa** are two eminent composers in the modern genre. The former, Ramachandran Nair I.A.S. has many fine compositions to his credit. Srivatsa who is an industrial executive has also proved his mettle as a composer.

Others who have made their mark as composers of the current generation include

Thanjavur Sankara Iyer, Lalgudi Jayaraman and Ambujam Krishna.

Sankara Iyer is a talented composer, especially in rare ragas. His compositions are in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu and include varnams, krithis, padams and javalis. 'Rama Namame' (Desh), 'Gitavadya' (Natakapriya), 'Manasaramathy' (Saramathy) and 'Balasubrahmanyam' (Vishnupriya) are some of his better known compositions.

Lalgudi Jayaraman is one of the composers whose varnams and thillanas are very popular in both the music and dance worlds. Furthermore they provide excellent guidelines for raga bhava. Jayaraman has composed outstanding varnams in ragas such as Shanmugapriya, Charukesi, Neelambari and Valaji. His beautiful thillanas are in ragas such as Madhuvanathi, Revathy, Tilang and Behag.

Ambujam Krishna composed nearly six hundred lyrics which were set to music by a large number of senior musicians. Quite a number of her compositions are very popular.

Composers have traditionally played a very important role in the development of Carnatic music. It is they, who, through their compositions establish the grammar and bhava of the many hundreds of ragas that are in vogue in Carnatic music today. The present list of composers while attempting to be comprehensive cannot be said to be exhaustive by any means. However, this listing shows that there already exists more than sufficient basic material for the continued growth of Carnatic music in the form of compositions and that in the current generation, there has been no dearth of composers of excellence. □



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ASPECTS TO BE EMPHASISED IN MODERN MUSICAL EDUCATION by Narada

In spite of the fact that larger numbers of students are taking to the study of Carnatic music than was the case a decade or more ago, the standards of Carnatic music have not risen appreciably; on the contrary, there is a perceptible decline, especially in respect of vocal Carnatic music. One of the main factors leading to this decline, appears to be the lack of sruthi shuddham.

Another way of saying it would be that the vocalist often tends to deviate from the basic pitch he has set for himself on the tambura. In this context, many music enthusiasts refer to the excellent voice culture that is the hall-mark of Hindustani classical music and suggest that one way in which the Carnatic musician could improve himself in voice culture would be by getting trained in Hindustani classical music.

I for one would not agree with such an approach; for, as any exponent of either system would readily agree, the voice culture for the two systems of music are entirely different. Whereas in North Indian music, the notes have a lesser degree of dependence on gamaka, the whole soul of Carnatic music rests in its accent in gamakas. Thus it is clear that a voice trained in the North Indian mode would not be capable of interpreting Carnatic music in a wholly satisfactory manner. The inverse would also be true. Those of us who have had the privilege of listening to great exponents of Hindustani music trying to sing Carnatic krithis or vice versa, would readily accept the validity of this argument.

The famous Carnatic musician, late D.K. Jayaraman said in an interview, that the sruthi alignment of our artists tends to be poor because of the predominant role played by gamakas in our music. He has also suggested that students of Carnatic music can improve sruthi alignment by practising a great deal of bald swaras, that is, swaras without gamaka. It is well known that the Pithamaha of Carnatic music,

Purandaradasa, has set up the initial lessons for Carnatic music in the form of varisais and alankaras.

Unfortunately, many a teacher of today, either because of the lack of requisite Gana, or because of compelling urge to exhibit sophistication at a very early stage itself, tries to introduce gamakas even while teaching varisais and alankarams. Why, for that matter we have seen many teachers who teach, the students even the basic sruthi alignment exercise of saying sa-pa-sa with gamakas as a result of which none of the swara positions are accurately sounded for any length of time. Naturally such training leaves one with a very poor sense of sruthi alignment and as the music gets more complicated with the introduction of gamakas, the sruthi tends to get more and more misaligned.

Let us leave such wrong teaching methods for the moment and consider even students who are subject to the right methods of instruction. One comes across many students who, as soon as they reach the stage of learning varnams, fail to practice and in many cases totally forget the varisais, alankarams and geethams as they consider it infra dig to practice the basic lessons any more. Not only that, they consider it even more infra dig to follow the very desirable and essential practice of singing the varisais, alankarams in the akara mode. Even on the violin and on the veena, students tend to go in for the gamaka phase a little too early in the game before they master the basic notes with perfect sruthi alignment.

What is the raga in which the modern Shishya should be initiated to Carnatic music?

While inaugurating the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Sri Thyagaraja Sabha in Bombay, the doyen of Carnatic music, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer made some remarks on the teaching of the elements of Carnatic music. Semmangudi expressed the view that the teaching of vocal music is based

on the veena and also that the raga Mayamalavagaula was not quite the appropriate raga in which the students should be taught the varisais and alankarams in Carnatic music. He felt that there were pairs of notes in that raga that were quite close to each other. Hence the students would not be able to easily comprehend the swara differences between such closely positioned pairs. He also pointed out that Bilaval (which is Sankarabharanam in the Carnatic music system) is the raga in which musical aspirants of Hindustani music are taught their elementary lessons. He also felt that Karaharapriya would be the best raga in which elementary lessons could be taught. One reason he adduced for this choice is that when Karaharapriya is sung with just flat notes, it still preserves the bhava of that raga.

Semmangudi has been advocating this view for quite some time now. However, it would be useful at the present juncture to analyse this topic in some depth. Mayamalavagaula is the 15th Melakarta raga, which was earlier known as Malavagaula. The prefix Maya was added in order to make the name of the raga conform to the Katapayadi system of nomenclature for Melakarta ragas in Carnatic music. It is the raga in which Carnatic music students have traditionally learnt their preliminary swara exercises, i.e., varisais and alankarams. There are a number of reasons for the choice of this raga, by great musicians of the past, for preliminary lessons in Carnatic music. This is probably the only sampurna raga, which has four pairs of notes with an interval of a semi-tone between the notes forming each pair. Incidentally it should be noted that each of these pairs belong to continuous swarasthanas in the fingerboard of the veena. Semmangudi uses this very characteristic of very small sruthi difference between the pairs of notes as an argument against using this raga for the beginner.

However, another way of looking at it would be that by teaching Mayamalavagaula, students are exposed to the fine semi-tonal intervals at the very early stage itself. Another

argument adduced in favour of Mayamalavagaula is that it has no notes with dual names; because, suddha rishabha, anthara gandhara, suddha madhyama, suddha dhaivatha and kakali nishadha are swara positions which are not occupied by any of the other notes in Carnatic music. (For example, chatusruthi rishabha has the same swara position as suddha gandhara, shatsruthi rishabha has the same position as sadharana gandhara and so on). It could be argued that the 51st Melakarta raga Kamavardhini, which was earlier known as Kashiramakriya, would also answer this description for it also has the same swara as Mayamalavagaula except for the fact that the prathi madhyama is used instead of the suddha madhyama. Here again, it should be remembered that experience has shown that a beginner is able to sing a suddha madhyama raga with greater ease than a prathi madhyama raga.

Another argument used in favour of Mayamalavagaula is that the two tetrachords of this raga are symmetrical (i.e., there is a symmetry between the four notes in the poorvanga or first half of the octave and the four notes in the uttaranga or second half of the octave). Furthermore, all possible daattu prayogas in this raga can be sung without offence to raga bhava. (A daattu swara is a note which is sung immediately after a note by omitting some intervening notes. Thus an example in this phrase d g r s d p in Mohana raga, the second note which is gandhara is the daattu swara in relation to its preceeding note which is dhaivatha. It will be seen here that one leaps from dhaivatha to gandhara, omitting the shadja and rishabha swaras, which intervene).

Incidentally, it may be noted that a daattu swara and its preceeding note normally have a samvadi anuvadi relationship. And last but not the least, taking into account the fact that Carnatic music is, after all, deeply allied to religion, Mayamalavagaula is considered an auspicious raga which is free from all doshas and has been praised by the famous

musicologist Ramamatya, as the best of all ragas.

As the eminent musician D.K.Jayaraman has said, preliminary exercises in Carnatic music should be aimed at establishing swarasthanas clearly and unambiguously in minds of the students. Thus, irrespective of the raga in which these preliminary exercises are taught, the notes would have to be sung straight without gamakas. Naturally the ragas considered in this context are those such as Mayamalavagaula and Karaharapriya. Similarly, typical ragas in which geethams and swarajathis have been composed are Malahari, Sudha Saveri, Mohanam, Abhogy and Bilahari. There are of course pieces in more advanced ragas as well. The early varnams that the students learn are in the ragas such as Sankarabharanam, Sri, Hamsadhwani and Abhogy. It is clear that upto this stage the student would benefit immensely by learning to sing straight unadorned swaras.

Even in the early stages of the post geethams, simple varnams stage, the student starts learning simple krithis in ragas such as Hamsadhwani, Suddha Saveri, Suddha Dhanyasi, and Panthuvrali. At this stage the student starts gradually gravitating towards the gamaka phase.

In this context another remark made by Semmangudi in the Thyagaraja Sabha Golden Jubilee Celebration is significant. He said that the best way of attracting young students to Carnatic music, instead of driving them away, is to teach them a lot of krithis, obviously simple straight forward ones, to start with. There can be no better advice than this;

for, through this process, the student is gradually made familiar with the basic character of various ragas. Experience has shown that as the students progress in music in this manner and become familiar with other relatively simple Melakarta ragas and Janya ragas in the early phase of their musical education, they would also do well to sing varisais and alankarams in every one of the new ragas in respect of which they are

undergoing the process of familiarisation. The level of such exercises should be gradually raised by the teacher by asking the students to sing the varisais and alankarams with gradually increased gamaka content so that, ultimately, the student would sing the varisais and alankarams just as swaraprasthara would be sung, i.e., singing of the various swaras of a particular raga in such a manner as to take into account all the graces of raga (ragasputam). In parallel, the gamaka content of all other compositions can also be raised. In this context I would like to mention that Koteeswara Iyer who composed Tamil krithis illustrative of all the seventy two Melakarta ragas used to sing basic varisais and alankarams in each raga (the more unfamiliar ragas) for long periods until he felt that he had captured the true character of each raga. It was only after that he would start composing the krithi in that particular raga. What was good for a great composer should prove even better for the diligent student.

I have already indicated how on reaching the phase of learning varnams, students try to drop varisais and alankarams. Similarly when they start learning krithis, they start thinking that the constant practice of varnams is to be eschewed as they have already reached a higher level. Many of them do not realise that the assiduous practice of varnams on a regular basis, in atleast two kalams would result in a demonstrable improvement in voice culture, raga and swara gnana and accuracy in thala. Further, such practice would lead to distinct improvement in one's ability to sing niraval and swaraprasthara.

Which brings me to the teaching of raga alapana, niraval and swaraprasthara. A few decades ago students, in particular, girls were taught only krithis with very little in the form of raga alapana, niraval and swaraprasthara. Times are changing and now all students are being taught all aspects of music. Experience has shown that when krithis are being taught to students they should also be made familiar with sancharas in that particular raga so that they learn to develop a feel for the character

of the raga. Incidentally, a sanchara is a study of non-rhythmic phrase that will validly come in a raga and can be ultimately woven into an organic and aesthetic whole. Similarly they should also be taught to sing simple short duration kalpana swaras. Dr. Pinakapani demonstrated in a lecture as to how students should practice large numbers of kalpana swaras of about half a thala cycle duration—say in adi thala—so that they will become familiar with both the handling of swara in conjunction with laya and also learn to arrive at the appropriate ending swara so that eduppu of the sahitya may occur at the appropriate point in the thala cycle. Similarly, a little later, simple niraval should also be taught and gradually made more complex. Raga alapana should also be taught as a successor to sancharas so that student is allowed to gradually build up capability to sing raga alapanas.

In the context of teaching of raga alapana to students, I remember reading somewhere that an eminent musician has said that raga alapanas cannot be taught.

One would broadly agree with this point of view; for, in the same manner in which genius had been defined as ninety nine percent perspiration and one percent inspiration, Carnatic music can be said to consist of twenty percent instruction, sixty percent perspiration and thirty percent inspiration. However, there is no gain saying the fact that the basics of raga alapana, niraval, and swaraprasthara have to be taught.

How is this to be done? Even while teaching the elementary varisais one finds that many a student is unable to capture the swarasthana of a particular swara. The best way to correct the student is to ask him/her to utter a number of swara combinations centered around that particular swara in respect of which the student is faltering. This method has been seen to be successfully used both in respect of older people who have decided to take up Carnatic music late in life as well as youngsters. It has also been observed that, even while teaching

geethams, elementary krithis, it helps if the teaching of each of these compositions is preceded by lessons of sancharas in that particular raga.

Initially sancharas are taught in the flat noted versions so that the student, in the first instance, attains faultless access to the swara positions. As the student advances, the same or similar sancharas are taught with the gradual introduction of gamakas so that the student is gradually introduced to the world of raga bhava. This procedure would equally apply to the teaching of geethams and elementary varnams and krithis. As the student progresses, simple exercises in the raga delineations have to be introduced at the appropriate stage so that the student gets a preliminary idea on the basic features of raga alapana.

As is well known, each raga has its own characteristic gathi or pace in which it has to be rendered. I heard this aspect being brilliantly demonstrated by the violin virtuoso Lalgudi Jayaraman who gave examples of the pace or gathi that is to be used in the exposition of ragas such as Nayaki and Darbar; Nayaki is to be rendered in a slower tempo, whereas Darbar comes through much faster.

Let us now come to swara singing. The best swaraprasthara consists in broadly matching the basic structure of the swara patterns with the patterns of swaras used by the vaggeyakara in the varna mettu or musical structure of the composition in question. The process of confident and accurate singing has to be gradually inculcated in the students by asking them to sing simple brief swaras in the first instance, before allowing them to expand their exposition in a graded manner. The introduction of raga bhava and its preservation even in fast tempo swara singing is an aspect to which every teacher has to pay special attention.

Niraval is even more difficult in Carnatic music. Before going on to a specific discussion on niraval, it would be useful to consider the manner in which the krithis are

themselves sung today in Carnatic music. In an article on Purandaradasa, the eminent musician, late Sandhyavandhanam Srinivasa Rao had made a plea for preserving the krithis of Purandaradasa in the original music or varna mettu (dhaathu) in which these compositions were set by the great composer himself. Srinivasa Rao says that he objects to new ways of rendering krithis even when the original music is available through Karnaparampara which is the traditional way in which music is transferred from ear to ear through the gurukula process or its equivalent. While this objection is well founded, it is equally true that the musical structures of many of Purandaradasa's compositions are no longer available in the original format envisaged by the composer. In such cases, as the sahityas are still precious it is imperative that eminent musicians should set them to music.

Just as the concept of gathi or gait or pace is applicable to raga expositions, it is even more strictly applicable to the exposition of krithis. Most compositions in Carnatic music belong to one of the two classes of tempo. One class is called the 'two kalai chaukam' or slow tempo and the other is the 'one kalai chaukam' or medium tempo. For example, a full cycle of Adi thala which consists of 8 beats in two kalai chaukam has a reasonably well defined time duration in which it should be completed.

Typical examples of compositions in two kalai chaukam would be 'O Rangasayi', a composition of Thyagaraja in Kambhoji and 'Meenakshi Memudham' a composition of Muthuswamy Dikshithar in Poorvi Kalyani. Similarly in one kalai chaukam, the same Adi thala cycle is completed in about half the time taken for two kalai. Some examples of compositions in this tempo are 'Bantureethi' and 'Raghunayaka' compositions of Thyagaraja in Hamsanaadham and Hamsadhwani respectively.

Scholar musician Chingelput Ranganathan, who is one of the finest lakshana vidwans, once sang a pallavi in Adi thala in misra nadai (which means that each

beat of the Adi thala is subdivided into seven equal intervals) and announced that the Adi thala was in two kalai chaukam. By this he means that Adi thala cycle would broadly confirm to the 'two kalai' duration notwithstanding the number of sub-beats into which each beat of the thalam is divided. Experts normally sing pallavis in four kalai chaukam which is even slower tempo (rarely heard these days).

Thus the composer for each krithi has envisaged a well-defined kalapramanam and to deviate from the original gathi in a clearly discernible manner should normally be as objectionable as the distortion of the sahitya. It goes without saying that a great musician like the late M.D.Ramanathan constitutes an exception to this rule. Those who have had the pleasure and privilege of listening to him sing krithis such as 'Kshirasagara' in Devagandhari and 'Ela Nee Daya' in Atana would readily recognise the significance of this statement.

Slow tempo singing calls for a tight hold on laya. The situation is even more demanding when the original tempo of a song is slowed down, for this calls for laya gnanam of the highest order. The other end of the spectrum is the sorry spectacle of vidwans trying to negotiate krithis at tempi far faster than those originally envisaged by the composer.

Apart from the krithi being commenced at the correct tempo, the importance of maintaining it steady throughout the rendering of the composition is an aspect, the importance of which cannot be sufficiently over emphasised. The role of a steady tempo in Western music can be no better illustrated than by the following incident. The great conductor Herbert Von Karajan who was conductor for life of the equally illustrious Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, told the orchestra after a strenuous rehearsal that he was going to a Louis Armstrong concert.

After a stunned silence, someone asked 'But Maestro, what pleasure, can you get from it?' Von Karajan replied 'I sit down and the band begins to play. I know that for

the next sixty minutes they will not get any faster or slower just stay exactly in tempo. And that, gentleman is more than I can say for you'.

The dhaathu or the basic music structure of a composition is another feature that calls for careful preservation. As the veteran musician, Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao said: "It is important to preserve paatanthara or karnaparampara so that the krithi preserves its original music content irrespective of the person who is singing it or playing it"

This remark would equally apply to sangathis that have been originally created by the composer of the song in question. However, the difficulties inherent in preserving the sangathi structures (as distinct from basic song structure) can be seen from the manner in which the same krithi of Thyagaraja is sung by the various branches

of his shishyaparampara. The important thing here is not so much to preserve every original sangathi right down to its minutest detail but to preserve as much of the original as possible and sing the composition in such a manner as not to cause damage to either the sahitya or the original music structure including sangathis.

It is inevitable however that there should be minor variations in respect of musical structure when the same krithi is rendered even by the same musician on different occasions; for the expositions of a krithi also calls for the inclusion of a considerable amount of manodharma or individualistic originality on the part of the musician.

To what extent are these aspects emphasised in modern musical education? □

Courtesy : The Economic Times

THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH....

- You have to do your own growing no matter how tall your grandfather was.
- Abraham Lincoln
- In the arithmetic of love, one plus one equals everything and two minus one equals nothing.
- Mignon Mc Laughlin
- Politics is the art of preventing people from becoming involved in affairs which concern them.
- Paul Valery
- The one pervading evil of democracy is the tyranny of the majority.
- John Dahlberg

From the Archives

SAHITYA IN KRITIS * by G.N. Balasubramaniam

At the outset I propose to deal in this article with the Kritis of the South Indian Trinity, Tyagaraja, Dikshitar and Syama Sastri, which have contributed to the growth and popularisation of modern Carnatic Music, not with those whose renderings have not come down to us in their authentic tunes either in print or through aural tradition. The latter have only a literary value.

The kriti in its present form is about five centuries old. It is this form that gives the greatest freedom for musical interpretation because of its simplicity and freedom from verbosity. It consists of: 1) a pallavi or the introductory portion, 2) the charana which is the essential part and, 3) the anupallavi which links the pallavi and the charana. Hence there is a musical scheme in the arrangement of these three segments.

Tyagaraja composed in Telugu and Dikshitar in Sanskrit. Telugu is a living and spoken language even today, and its vocabulary is such as to allow free scope for expressing intimate personal experiences and in words that have liquid and soft consonants and therefore add to the musical euphony of verbal expression. Sanskrit, as a language, though more stately and dignified lends itself more to formal exposition, especially of philosophic and vedantic truths and it is more rigid and elaborate in its grammar and syntax. It has all the disadvantages of being the language of books and scholars.

Though all the Trinity composed in this form, each has given the kriti his own individual stamp. Dikshitar added to the usual simple form, madhyama kala sahitya at the end of the anupallavi and the charana and sometimes even at the end of the pallavi itself. Sri Tyagaraja has also a few kritis where he uses only madhyamakala sahitya for the

entire charana. There are some kritis of Tyagaraja known as 'Divyanamas' which have only pallavi and charanam, like the bhajans of the north. Dikshitar has also many pieces called 'Samashti Kirtana' where there is no anupallavi but only pallavi and charanam. Syama Sastri has appended swara sahitya to kritis which Tyagaraja does not seem to have done at all. The well-known Pancharatna kritis of Tyagaraja, always sung at the time of the annual aradhana at his samadhi in Thiruvayyaru, are all in prabhandha form having as many as eight to eleven charanas in each. These are the variations we find in the structure of the compositions of the Trinity.

It will be interesting to know what Tyagaraja himself has described as an ideal kriti. In his Sriranjani piece 'Sosasuga' he says that it should contain the highest truths from our scriptures expressed in faultless diction, breathing sincere and intense devotion to God and with pauses and Caesura and in the nine rasas. His own kritis exemplify this definition. Tyagaraja was a mystic and a Bhakta while Dikshitar was an intellectual and a Gnani. The mystic realises God through his feelings and intuition. For him, God is a living entity, with whom he feels he is in intimate personal contact always. For the Gnani, on the other hand, God is more a concept than a living reality, his approach to God being through logic, learning and the intellect. Hence it is that Dikshitar's kritis are detached and impersonal descriptions and stotras of the Gods of the Hindu Pantheon, while those of Tyagaraja are records of personal and emotional experiences of God. One finds therefore that the compositions of the former are of the type of Prabhandas and stotras, while those of Tyagaraja are of the type of Kavyas and lyrics.

* Paper presented at the AIR Music Symposium at New Delhi in 1960.

Dikshitar's kritis are mostly, as said before, stotras and as such are built up of sambhodhanas or vocatives, though even in these his great erudition and scholarship in advaitic philosophy are borne out in an astonishing manner and to a surprising degree. He sometimes gives the impression of a cold catalogist of details like those of the iconography of a particular God, of the agama of a particular temple, even the dates on which special festivities are conducted according to the Hindu calendar for the particular deity and the methods of worshipping Him or Her. Many expressions describing the qualities and forms of these Gods or Goddesses are found to be echoes of and from well-known religious hymns current in and amongst the Hindus like the 'Lalitha Trisathi', 'Sahasranama' of Lalitha, the 'Soundarya-Lahari' and the like.

Each of Tyagaraja's kritis has a scheme not only of music but also thought. The layout of his kriti is :- the statement of a proposition in the pallavi, which is dialated upon in the anupallavi and amply exemplified in the charana, through perfect logic and reasoning. For example in the piece 'Sarasa Samadana', set in the raga Kapinarayani, the Pallavi means "O! Rama, You are an expert in statesmanship and in handling its four expedients, namely, 1. *Sama* (conciliation), 2. *Dana* (winning over with gifts), 3. *Bedha* (splitting the enemies) and 4. *Danda* (punishing by war and weapons)". The anupallavi means "You tendered any amount of benefecient advice to Ravana (an example of *Sama*). You sincerely offered Ayodhya to him (in the event of his surrender to you) having already promised Lanka to Vibhishana (an example of *Dana*). You made Vibhishana, king of Lanka even while Ravana was alive (an example of *Bedha*) and finally you destroyed Ravana (an example of *Danda*)". In addition to this, no other composer has given out his personal views on religion, philosophy, music, Nadayoga and his own religious experiences, as Tyagaraja has in and through his compositions. All these are expressed in a telling and terse, but homely language. To bring home to the listener, the

force of a statement of his, he uses as device, which no other composer has handled namely proverbs, some of which are his own and most of them in common parlance amongst South Indian musicians. To quote a few, in 'Meevalle' in Kapi raga, there are two: 1) If the gold is not of requisite quality, why blame the goldsmith. 2) In the kriti 'Evaritho' there is one - 'trying to make the image of Ganesa and producing that of a monkey'. There are some compositions of his, with a number of charanas, in each of which there is a proverb e.g. 'Samayamuthelisi' in Asaveri.

Dikshitar is a master of Pada Jala as is seen even in the ingenious way in which he welds the names of the raga of the piece into the sahitya of the song. He is an adept in Praasam or rhyme. It is astonishing how many rhyming syllables he can make for a difficult syllable. To give an example, the Navavarna piece in Anandabhairavi 'Kamalamba' is one. Almost all his kritis abound in beautiful Pada Jala and Praasam. Syama Sastri uses a small vocabulary but the language though simple is very elegant and expressive. His attitude to his ishtadevata, being a simple one, that of a child yearning for its mother, there are not a great many and different words or expressions found in his kritis. But even in the sahitya, one can see the lilt of rhythm dancing through the syllable. To realise the effect of his kritis one will have to listen to, rather than read the text of his songs.

There is an esoteric side of the compositions of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar. A critical study of both the music and words of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar's compositions will make it very clear that the hidden meanings and beauties of Tyagaraja's pieces are more in the sphere of melody and those of Dikshitar in that of sahitya. Of course in the compositions of both, the two aspects are inseparable. It is only a question of emphasis. Tyagaraja, as his ideal was, was able to make in an unequalled way, melody typify the meaning. His kritis are the highest examples of the holiest wedlock of music or melody with sahitya or words. A classic example is found in his Charukesi piece 'Adamodi'. The theme

of the piece is Sugreeva and Rama getting acquainted with each other through Hanuman in the region of Dandakaranya. The raga octave of the piece is made up of two tetrachords. The upper one belongs to the mela of Todi or Hindustani Bhairavi, while the lower one belongs to the mela of Sankarabharanam or Bhilaval. Sankarabharanam was the most popular raga in ancient Dravidian music while Bhairavi was the one in the North. Ancient musical texts like the "Swaramelakalanidhi" do not mention the name of Todi at all and Venkatamakhi, the codifier of the 72 Melakartas definitely refers to this Todi as a Northern raga. It is very significant that the piece begins on the note panchama, the point of contact between the upper and lower tetrachords of this particular scale.

To give another example: In the 'Bhiaravam' piece 'Mariyadagadaiya', Tyagaraja accuses Rama saying that Rama had a reputation for favouring his own men in preference to strangers. This is melodically picturised, by a difficult and rare musical device known as 'Srutibedha' or 'Grahabedha'. If the note Madhyama of Bhairavam is made the Shadja and the notes of the original raga are traversed up and down, from madhyama to tarashadjam, an illusion is created in the minds of the listeners that they are listening to Yaman or Kalyani. To indicate the difference between the followers of Rama and strangers, Tyagaraja has introduced through Grahabedha an alien scale, seemingly though, in thorough contrast with the original one. There are many kritis of Tyagaraja where even the name of the raga chosen for a piece has a meaningful relationship with the theme of the song. To give just one example, 'Bagayanayya' is composed in the raga Chandrajyoti. The meaning of the song is 'how wonderful is this great magic of yours, beyond even Brahma for praising it. Doing this magic yourself, you are proclaiming that you are not doing it. When Arjuna trembled to obey your commands to destroy the Kauravas, calling it a sin, did you not thus protect him'. It is

wellknown that the moon is not self-effulgent borrowing as it does its light from the sun, but the illusion is that it is luminous by itself. One can see the appositeness of the very name of this particular raga for the piece. There are many instances of this kind.

That the esoterics of Dikshitar are more in the text of the songs can be amply borne out by a study of his 'Kamalamba' Navavarna pieces and his krithis on Tyagaraja, the God of his birth place. In the latter, there are references to the Ajapa or Hamsa Mantra belonging to the highest advaitic vidya. According to this, the Atman in this material clothing of a body is swinging in the net or cradle of 'prana' or the breath. There is an eternal rhythm in this process of inhalation and exhalation, which is the dance of the soul. The inhalation is the 'Ham' and the exhalation is the 'Saha' and both together - 'I am He'. This supreme mantra, all through all one's life, is being uttered, a - japa, that is in an inarticulate manner. This is symbolised in the Tiruvarur shrine and in the picture of Tyagaraja being placed and worshipped over the heart on the reclining Vishnu and dancing as Vishnu's chest moves up and down in the act of breathing.

The Kamalamba Navavarna kritis expound the worship of Devi in the Sri Chakra according to Sri Vidya cult known as 'Tantras'. There are nine avaranas or prakaras in the chakra. The innermost is the Bindu Peeta where Devi or the supreme soul is seated. To reach Devi, one has to pass all the avaranas or enclosures. Each avarana has its own reigning and tutelary deities who are all Devi herself in various forms and capacities. Worship of Devi is either external (Bahya) or internal (Antara). The foregoing is the basis of external worship. The esoteric meaning of this worship is realised and practised by Antarayogins who do not indulge in external rituals. According to this method, all the avaranas excepting the last and innermost, are representative of the Vrithees or propensities of the mind, which have to be subjugated by discipline, until the mind thus purified and in its most exalted state becomes one with the Supreme Soul or Devi. The first

Avarana typifies the mind in the waking (Jagrata) state. In this, all things and appearances have form and clarity. Hence the Avarana Devatas here are called 'Prakata Yogins'. The second typifies the dream sleep (Swapna) state in which things have a subtle shape and are the creations of the mind. The Avarana Devatas here are known as 'Gupta Yoginis'. The third is the dreamless sleep (Sushupti) state. Things here are in a super-subtle state. Yoginis in this region are called 'Guptathara Yoginis'. The fourth is the mind enquiring after God. The Avarana Devatas here are known as 'Sampradaya Yoginis' - Sampradaya here meaning that which is handed down through Guru-sishya parampara. The fifth is the region of 'Kulotheerna Yogins', signifying the Tatvas or subtle forms of Karma and Gnana Indriyas. This stage typifies to the Guru - Guru Upasadanam. Similarly the sixth typifies the state of Guru initiation and the Devatas of

this avarana are called 'Nigarbha Yoginis'. The seventh Avarana signifies the stage of meditation or Manana and the Devatas here are called 'Rahasya Yoginis'. The eighth signifies the stage previous to moksha or release, the stage of nidhi-dhyasana and the Devatas here are called 'Paraparathirahasya Yogins'. This is the stage of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Without being conversant with the technical terms used in this cult, a full understanding of the inner meaning and significance of these kritis is impossible.

To write or talk about the beauties of words and sounds or the inner meanings or philosophies of the compositions of these two remarkable men of genius is beyond the scope of this limited article. The kritis of this Trinity are matchless creations being the expression of God-realised Supermen, to whom the world of Music and rasikas will be and should be everlastingly indebted. □

"Adwaita in Songs"

'Marugēlarā, Oh Rāghavā' (Jayantasri): Characara rūpa ... anni nivanucu
(The entire creation is Thy form and Thou art everything...)

- Sri Tyagaraja

'Sri Viswanatham' (Chaturdasa Rāgāmālika): Virinci Vishnu - Rudramūrti Mayam
(Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra Swarupa)

'Sri Kamalambikaya' (Sankarabharanam):
Tripadaya (Aham Brahmasmi Swarupini)

- Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar

'Antā Rāmamayam - Ee Jagadānta Rāmamayam - Tanokkadananta Rupa Mula...

- Sri Bhadrachala Ramadasa

'Ādinadeppadiyō, Kandayo Maname: Anda Muzhudum Brahmam'

'Kandavar Vindilare: Advaitanubhavam Vakkukkettadadu
(Experience of Adwaita is beyond the reach of clarification)

- Muthu Thandavar

(Courtesy: "Yet Another Garland"
by Shri N. Rajagopalan)

From the Archives

PADAMS IN RELATION TO KRITIS *

by T. K. Jayarama Iyer

Padams and Kritis are two priceless gems of musical forms in the rich repertoire of the Carnatic system. They have some characteristics common to both and some peculiarities that make them distinct. These two musical forms are the references for the musician in elaborating the Raga in the correct way.

Songs with the olden name as Padas were intended to kindle Bhakti or devotion to God. They also contained lofty ideas of philosophy and ethics. The Dasakuta of Karnataka have poured forth a great number of Padas in the Kannada language and they are popularly known as *Dasarapadagalu*: pre-eminent amongst *Padakaras* is Purandara Dasa who lived in the 16th century. He alone has contributed thousands of Padas.

The word *Padam* with the *Anuswara* inflection connotes a song which has on the surface *Sringara* as the *Rasa* and on a philosophical interpretation brings out a sublime and spiritual inner meaning. It is noteworthy that Tyagaraja, the pre-eminent amongst Kritis composers has used the words Kritis and *Padam* interchangeably in some of his songs considering the devotional content of both. For example, in a song in the Raga *Sriranjani*, he uses the word Kritis:-

Yativisrama sad bhakti,
Virati draksha rasa nava rasa
Yuta kritiche bhajiyinche
Yukti Tyagarajuni tarama? Sri Rama
(Sogasuga)

Here, in another song in the Raga *Asaveri*, he speaks of the *Padam*:-

Padamu Tyagaraja nutunipai ganidi,
Padiyemi pada kunna nemi
Edanu Sri Rama bhakti leni nara janmam

Etti emi etta kunna nemi
(Samayamu Delisi).

Thus we see that the underlying idea in both the *kriti* and the *Padam* is *Bhakti*. *Bhakti*, again, is dual in expression. It is explicit in the *kirtana* and *kriti*, while it is implied in the *Padam*. *Madhura Bhava*, that is, the love of woman for a man has been approved of as an aspect of *Bhakti* by sages and saints. Sankaracharya while defining *Bhakti* likens it, among other examples, to the attachment or devotion of a *Sadhwi* (woman) to her husband :-

Ankolam rijabeeja santhatih
Ayaskanthopalam suchika
Sadhwi naija vibhum lata kshirirham
Sindhus sarid vallabham
Pramnoteeha yatha thatha
Pashupateh padara vindadvayam
Cheto vrithirupetya tishthati sada
Sa Bhaktirityuchyate

Kshetragna, the great *Bhakta* who lived in the 17th century stands foremost amongst composers of *Padams*. His devotional songs in the Telugu language are in the *Madhura Bhava* bringing out the various aspects of *Sringara Rasa*. Most of the *Padams* are devoted to *Vipralampha Sringara* covering all possible situation in which the *Nayika* experiences the pangs, passion and longing on her separation from her beloved. The 3 types of *Nayikas*, viz. the *Sweeya*, the *Parakeeya* and the *Samanya* have been featured separately in a number of *Padams*. The longing of the sweetheart for her beloved is symbolic of the yearning of the *Jeevatma* for its reunion with the *Paramatma* or the Supreme *Nayaka* in order to attain the immeasurable and eternal *Ananda*.

* Paper presented at the 8th Radio Sangeet Sammelan at New Delhi, 1961

Tyagaraja, as a great Bhakta, has also applied this medium of devotion in some of his songs. He takes the role of a *Sweeya Nayika* and speaks to Rama in several moods. The sentiments are revealed in refined and subdued expressions. Take for example his kriti in the Raga Kalanidhi :-

*Chinna nade na chei battitivi
Ennarani udigannu geikeni
Entho ninnu palanamu sethunani*

(You grasped my hand when I was quite young.
O Rama, you made me do service to you immeasurably
and you promised to protect me. Pray, do not waver
now.)

Tyagaraja employs the *Duti* also as do the *Padakaras*. The *Duti* or messenger symbolises the Guru who leads the *Jeevatama* on to its communion with the Supreme. Here is a kriti of Tyagaraja in the raga *Harikambodi* in which he employs the mind as the *Duti*.

*Chani toditheve, O Manasa
Kanikaramuto gani kanikaramidi chira -
Kalamu sukhamanubhavimpa vegame
(Chani toti).*

The love of the *Parakeeya Nayika* symbolises devotional intensity. *Gopalakrishna Bharati*, a Bhakta, and a contemporary of Tyagaraja, in one of his songs which describes and defines *Bhakti* compares steadfast and intense devotion to the love of a beautiful woman to her paramour.

*Kattazhagi choranidam
Kathal althu pole
Kaduhi varum kanrarugil
Kapila yathu pole
Bhakti pannikondirunthal.*

There are plenty of Padams in which the *Parakeeya* and *Samanya Nayikas* figure.

However, amongst *Kritikaras* it is perhaps Tyagaraja, who has employed this aspect of *Bhakti* to a limited extent and that

too in a subdued appeal of *Sringara*. Almost all the other major composers of kritis have sung in the direct manner of devotion conched in words of high praise of and prayer to the deities.

So far, the comparison of Padam and Kriti as regards their textual content.

Musically, the Padams may be said to be Ragas in crystallized form. Most of the Padams are in well-known Rakti Ragas. The sustained, slow tempoed long-drawn music of the Padams brings out the beauty and *Bhava* of the Ragas in overflowing abundance. This quality might have inspired many a composer including the Trinity. There are many kritis composed after the model of the Padam. For example:

Compare the Padam 'Ninnujuchi' -
Ehi Annapurne of Dikshitar and
Kanakasaila of Shyama Sastri
all set in the Raga Punnagavarali.

Tyagaraja's song *Lekana* in the Raga *Asaveri* may be said to be after the style of the Padam.

The structure of the kriti as well as the Padam has the same sections, viz., Pallavi, anupallavi and one or more Charanams. However, the kriti is quite distinct from the Padam on account of the superb workmanship in its structure. For example the kriti of Tyagaraja are adorned with brilliant *Sangatis* or variations of the theme.

The kritis of Dikshitar are enlivened with the *Madhyamakala sahitya* and embellished with beautiful *Yatis*.

In the kritis of Shyama Shastri we find an integration of Raga and Tala.

While Padams are mostly in popular Rakti Ragas, the kriti composers have handled many rare and difficult Ragas in their compositions.

While almost all the kritis are begun with the singing of the Pallavi, most of the Padams are begun with the singing of the Anupallavi.

Most of the Padams are set to the *Triputa Tala* of 7 matras and are sung in the *Vilamba laya* whereas the bulk of the kritis

are set to the *Aditala* and the *Rupaka Tala* of 8 and 6 matras respectively.

The medium tempo of most of the kritis shining brilliantly with *Sangatis*, *Chitta swaras* and other musical decorations, gives a refreshing treat to the head and the heart. The elaboration of a line in the Kriti with *neraval* or *Bol Tan* and the singing of a chiselled *swaraprastharas* to the *Eduppu* or *Jagah* of the music is really an intellectual feast. By virtue of these and other musical and textual excellences, the kritis deservingly occupy a dominant status in a concert. When Padams are sung in a concert, they come only after the Kritis and the Ragam, Tanam, Pallavi.

The Padam is essentially a dance form. Its excellence is best enjoyed in *Bharatha Natyam*. After dancing the brisk and exciting forms like the *Swarajati* and the *Varnam*, the Padam with its slow, melodious music comes as a soothing breeze. The dancer has great scope to show off her skill in *abhinaya* to the accompaniment of this form which is set to leisurely tempo. The audience gets the highest delight both visual and aural in this item viz. the Padam.

Kshetranga alone is credited to have composed a few thousands of Padams. And the kritis of the great composers may be in equal number. Indeed many of both the forms have been lost due to the non-usage. The bulk of the repertoire of Carnatic music extant consists of kritis. Fortunately more than a thousand of these have been printed and published with notation.

As regards Padams the text of only a few hundreds are in print. But, of these only about a hundred or so have been published in notation and again in the matter of the correct rendering of these Padams the figure dwindles in a few scores. What is the cause for this decline? Of course, not all the creations can be expected to survive. Only the best can do. On account of the explicit description of the *Sringara* of the *Nayaka* and *Nayika*, many Padams were branded as lascivious and were not sung. I have seen a printed book of Padams marked 'for private circulation only'. However, a few families of musicians have kept alive the small number of padams now available. To sing a Padam with all its emotional appeal is not an easy achievement. Padams can best be learnt only from those who render them in the traditional manner. There are a good number of Padams in the Tamil language. Sri Swati Tirunai has composed some in the Malayalam language. Though the Padams in Tamil and Malayalam are set to a comparatively quicker tempo than that of the Telugu Padams, they are popular in *Bharata Natyam* as well as in the concert. The mellifluous language and the melodious and chaste music in the slow tempo of the Padam create a stirring emotional appeal. Certainly the Padam occupies a prominent status in Carnatic music. Let us hope that this valuable form of music is kept alive by our musicians. □



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FROM 'SADIR' TO BHARATA NATYAM
A - NOSTALGIA
by 'Natyacharya' T. K. Mahalingam Pillai

Seventyfive years ago I had seen the art of 'Sadir' at temples. The art of dance, respected and venerated as divine, was then offered to deities as a form of worship. Its divinity could be experienced especially when it was offered as part of daily rituals in Sandhya (evening) puja and during festivals such as Brahmotsavam.

I was eight years old then. I remember the Brahmotsavam being celebrated every March at the Shiva Temple. The deities were Lord Jatapureeswarar and consort Marusalakshi Thayar at Tirumalairayanpattinam (my birth place). The town was then under the French rule. But temple rituals and festivals were conducted without any hindrance or interference. Brahmotsavam was an eagerly awaited event, celebrated with much devotion and reverence.

During the Sandhya Puja, the senior Devadasi captured in Abhinaya the ritual of Shodashopachara offered to the deities. The visualisation in gesture language was done to the accompaniment of instrumental music, Maddalam and Cymbals (Nattuva Talam). And at Deeparadhana Nagaswaram was played.

The 'offerings' transcended to a rich experience during festivals with full-fledged concerts of Nagaswaram, Sadir, Vocal, Veena, Flute taking place. The Nagaswaram concert was called 'Peria Melam' and 'Sadir' came to be known as 'Chinna Melam'. The rest were music concerts.

'Sadir'. The name came to be attributed to dance as it was presented at the 'Sadas' - assembly. Well-known Devadasis, specially trained in the art made an Arpanam (offering) of it to the Lord. And presenting during festivals the Sthala Puranas of the respective temples in dance-drama form made it not only an entertaining art but also an education on the Sthalas (places) and various stories

woven around it. There evolved thus "Kuravanji" Natya Natakas. Kutralakkuravanji, Kumbesar Kuravanji, Kunnak-kudi Kuravanji, Vralimalai Kuravanji, Tiruvarur Tyagesar Kuravanji and Tiruvidaimarudur Madhyarjuna Kuravanji are some of the prominent Natya Natakas presented in those times (Lyrics of some of the Kuravanjis, especially that of Madhyarjuna Kuravanji are not traceable). The Sadir and other concerts took place at the Prakaram in specially erected Pandals and at the Kalyana Mantapam.

The grand procession of the deities round the four street called "Mada Veedis" to the accompaniment of Periya Melam (Nagaswaram), Veda Ghosha and Tevara - Tiruvachaka Pann rendition was another significant feature of festival times. As the procession reached the north-east side, the Chinna Melam took over with Devadasis and the Nattuvanar rendering the Tevaram. Tiruvachakam composed on the deities, accompanied by Mukhavina, Maddalam, Sruti and Nattuva-talam, till they reached the temple premises. After entering the temple, they performed what was known as "Thattu Chutral" and Pradakshina in which an elephant was also included, and bring out the deities from Vahanas. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with Bhakti and artistes gave out their best in utter surrender to the Lord.

The commencement of Brahmotsavam was always marked with the auspicious "Kodiyetram" (flag hoisting, Dwajaroohanam). And when the deity came round the Prakaram, Navasandhi Kavuthvam was performed by the Devadasis, propitiating the Ashta Dik Devatas - Indra, Agni, Yama, Nairuti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera and Esanya with Brahma at centre to the accompaniment of Veda Ghosha and music. Such was the sanctimonious status given to dance then. It is indisputable that owing to the

sanctity attached to Sadir and the reverence with which it was practised, preserved and propagated by the Nattuvanars and Devadasis who dedicated it as 'Devarpanam' that the art has come a long way down the centuries and spread over the world with a new sheen christened as Bharata Natyam, encapsulating Bhava-Raga-Tala.

Digressing a bit, let me probe the concept of 'Peria Melam' and 'Chinna melam'. I have been intrigued since childhood why Nagaswara concert was called 'Peria Melam' and Sadir 'Chinna Melam'. Was it because of the size and tone of the instruments played? But why 'Chinna' Melam for dance where Devadasi was the prime performer? It was not until 1948 that some light was thrown on it at the Natyakala Conference convened by Connoisseur-Advocate Sarangapani at Museum Theatre, Egmore, Madras, where all Nattuvanars and Vidwans participated. The conference, aimed at promoting and propagating the art of Bharata Natyam, comprised sessions of discussions in the morning and performances in the evening. Many stalwarts of the day like E. Krishna Iyer, Prof. Sambamoorthy, Tiruvizhimizhalai Subramania Pillai and brother, Pandanallur Chokkalingam Pillai, Muthiah Pillai, Subbarayan Pillai, Vazhuvur Ramaiah Pillai, my father T.P. Kuppiyah Pillai and many other Vidwans participated. That year the question of 'Chinna Melam' came for examination. A probable explanation was given by Vazhuvur Ramaiah Pillai. He said since Natyam is "Deivika Chinna" - a divine 'symbol', and offered as a divine 'Arpanam', the Deivika 'Chinna' Melam might have in course of time come to be called 'Chinna Melam'. In Tirunelveli district Peria Melam was called 'Raja Melam' and 'Deva Melam'. This explanation appeared more plausible to Vasudeva Sastri, a renowned scholar - archivist of Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal. E. Krishna Iyer, the crusader for dance renaissance, endorsed it and the rest accepted it.

In this context, I would like to make a note of what was called "Gandharva Melam".

Legend has it that in the Devendra Loka, dancers Ramba, Tilottama, Menaka and Urvashi used to perform to the Nattuvangam of Maharaja Chitrangada. It is well-known from many compositions that when Lord Shiva and Parashakti danced, Nandi provided Maddalam, Narada played Yazh, Brahma kept Talam and Vishnu played the flute. But the celestial dancers, Ramba and others were accompanied by the Gandharvas. Hence the name 'Gandharva Melam'.

Such 'Deivika Chinna Melam' had many well-versed exponents, prominent among whom was erudite performer, Devadasi Tiruvarur Gnanaththammal. She was versatile and proficient in languages - Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu - and the arts of music and dance. The other eminent dancers who dedicated their lives to the art and the deity were Kumbakonam Bhanumathy, Varalakshmi sisters, Tiruvalaputhur Kalyani's daughters - Rajalakshmi sisters, Pandanallur Jayalakshmi etc.

They wore "Thuyya Selai" (Saree made of soft material) and an upper garment ("Angi") signifying purity; and their jewellery consisted of what is known as 'temple jewellery' - head ornaments, Kasumalai, Oddiyanam(belt) and Chalangai(anklets). The orchestra comprising Nattuvanar, Vocalist, Mridangist, Mukha Vina and Sruthi was mobile following the dancer. It was mikeless age and performance was in temple Prakaram. In the din of the crowd it was difficult for the dancer to have feed back of music.

As times changed dance performances were extended to royal courts and wedding halls. Nattuvanars like Kandappa Nattuvanar (Balasaraswathy's Guru), Ellappa Pillai propagated the art. Exponents mentioned earlier were featured. And repertoire too was stretched from Sthala Purana-based Sampradayaic Natya Natakas to solos with compositions dedicated to deities as well as royal patrons. The compositions were mostly in Telugu as the patron kings, Nayaks of Tanjore, got Vidwans from Vijayanagar to

compose pieces for dance and naturally these were in Telugu. After the advent of the Trinity who too composed in Telugu and Sanskrit, came the Tanjore Quartet (Chinnayya, Ponnaiah, Sivanandan and Vadivel), the disciples of Muthuswamy Dikshitar. They made history in the fields of music and dance - devising for the first time a Margam for a Sadir Cutcheri, comprising Alarippu, Jatiswaram, Sabdam, Varnam/Swarajati, Padam, Javali, Tillana in that order and composed pieces for these. The Margam format is the format followed even today. Most of them are again in Telugu. *Samini Rammanave* (Khamas), *Dhanike*(Todi), *Manavi*(Sankarabharanam) are a few popular Varnams for instance in praise of the Lord, the royal patron etc.

There was a lull during the early quarter of this century. In spite of its sustained development for centuries, the art fell into disrepute and came to be looked down upon "as social evil" by "misinformed and misguided reformers under Western influence". The deterioration of the Devadasi class also to an extent contributed to the decline of the art. The anti nautch movement almost spelt doom of the performing arts. Thanks to the will and untiring efforts of a couple of Natyacharya families with an unbroken lineage and that of crusader E. Krishna Iyer, together with Rukmini Arundale who founded the Kalakshetra at Adyar, Madras, the phase of renaissance successfully cleared the performing scene of

the muck and maze. Re-emerged the art of dance with a more dignified name, "Bharata Natyam", drawn from Bharata's *Natya Sasira* and Nandikeswara's *Abhinaya Darpana*, and connoting Bhava-Raga-Tala.

Bharata Natya was presented on public platforms with respectability. That Kalashetra was a milestone in the history of Bharata Natyam goes without saying and with 'Baby Kamala' playing a role model, many families came forward to train their children in the art. The costumes, jewellery were made more dignified and tasteful. The Margam set by the Tanjore quartet was fully employed. Besides additions of Tamil compositions from Pasurams, Arunachala Kavi's Rama Nataka Keerthanas, from Gopalakrishna Bharati, Vedanayakam Pillai, Muthu Tandavar enriched the repertoire.

For the past thirty years, Sampradaya Natya is presented at temples, especially during festivals. The Shivaratri Mahotsav at the temple of Lord Nataraja at Chidambaram is noteworthy. Natyanjali is offered at the specially erected pandal in the Prakaram. Not only Bharata Natyam, but also Kathak, Kuchipudi, Mohini Attam, Odissi are presented. Similar Natya festivals are held in Perur, Sirkazhi. Nearer home at Satara, known as Uttara Chidambaram, dance recitals, arangetrams are organised every month at the Nataraja Sannidhi.

Trends and innovations apart, temple tradition of Natyanjali continues. □



KINGS, TORCH-BEARERS OF CULTURE

by 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Monarchs belong to a fast vanishing tribe. In some countries, rulers may reign but do not rule. Broadly viewed, it could be appreciated that Indian kings so long as they had existed, with few exceptions, were liberal, kind and solicitous of the welfare of their subjects. Most of them were lovers and patrons of music, dance, sculpture, architecture, etc. and some of them were themselves legendary authors, musicians, musicologists, etc. like the Guptas, Vijayanagar kings and rulers in far South of India. Their courts were flooded with poets and artistes and there grew up around their courts harems not of flesh but of devout arts and dedicated artistes. Legends have cropped up righteously but so much in abundance around their illustrious lives that it is difficult to separate the chaff from the grain. The model of an ideal ruler held out in epics and illumined by illustrious rulers in the past by precept and example laid the stern path to be followed.

Even when the aggressive expansion of British Rule crippled the powers of native rulers, the matchless legacy was rarely neglected, nay, often it shone with added effulgence and fragrance. The rulers of Mysore, Thanjavur, Kerala, etc. were shining examples. What was a loss to liberty and administration was indeed a massive gain to art and literature. They did not know to mourn their fate in vain and silence like Napoleon but took their harsh lives on the stride like Maharajah Swati Tirunal, Raja Serfoji, rulers of Mysore, etc. to enrich the culture of the country even as our immortal leaders like Tilak did. Here are a few very interesting anecdotes narrated by the renowned *vaggeyakara*, Mysore Vasudevacharya in his autobiography *Nenapugalu* in Kannada. They reveal the close and cordial bonds that existed between the ruler and the ruled, manifesting the fact that each lived for the other for the common good. Now the inimitable Vasudevacharya takes over.

'I had the opportunity to listen to the concerts of both the celebrated Patnam Subramanya Ayyar and Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar and resolved to learn music from them. Ambition was there, but how to achieve it? Finally I made up my mind to seek the gracious help of the Maharajah of Mysore himself? Daily, the Maharajah would visit the Chamundi temple on hill top for worship. I made it my habit to take my stand at the foot of the hill every day and salute him and his party too. As luck would have it, one day the Maharajah [presumably intrigued] graciously giving me a hearing, enquired who I was and what I wanted. That was the opportunity I had long prayed for. He asked me to meet him in the palace when I mentioned my desire. First he asked me to teach Sanskrit to the royal children. [My integrity was in the meanwhile duly tested.] Though I had intimate royal grace aplenty, my fond desire remained an unfulfilled dream. And at last, when I chose to cautiously remind him when he was resting, he called the officer concerned at once and ordered him to equip me with necessary funds and the needed letter to the great Patnam Subramanya Ayyar'. [And young Vasu was at Tiruvaiyaru soon after, a devoted disciple of 'Patnam', as is well known.]

[There is the other incident of musicians Chinna and Periya Vaithi taking on the garb of mendicants and singing classical *paramparya* 'Pallavi' at the same temple to the hearing of the visiting *rasika*, the Maharajah to gain admission to the Court to present a concert. The music-crazy ruler wondered at the rare expertise and talents of mendicants in the difficult art of singing *pallavi*, enquired, found their real identity and wish and took them to the court!]

'The music-crazy Maharajah while

taking his breakfast after *Siva puja* was enchanted by the captivating tune of a beggar woman singing in the street! [Music is well-known to be the leveller and makes no distinction on ground of creed or rank to bestow its boons.] He expressed a desire whether I could take the notation for the song and sing. I ran out and, alas! found that she was too fast for me! Ultimately I traced her near the Rani Choultry where bairagis gather. With much difficulty I persuaded her to sing and managed to jot down the notation for it'.

[Well, what was the bargain? Like the 'face' of the milkmaid in the ballad, the few songs she knew were that beggar's inalienable, inherited fortune and no wonder she was averse to part with it!]

'I parted with my costly *angavastra* [upper cloth] in a *quid pro quo*! I rushed back and demonstrated the tune before the Maharajah aided by the notation. Appreciating my achievement, he [mischievously] enquired about my missing upper cloth. He had, it would appear, sent his servant to follow me and got how I had got the tune. He was so pleased with me that he presented me with a costly shawl in appreciation'.

[That reveals a camaraderie of noble values. Perhaps I could narrate one more incident though Vasudevacharya has narrated many.]

'Chamarajah Wodeyar used to take me and Subbanna with him whenever he went

on camp. While at the Nilgiris, Subbanna fell sick with high fever. He declined food. Anxious about his condition, the Maharajah himself took up the responsibility of feeding him saying, "Subbu, You must not starve like this. You must take this porridge as it acts like a soft cushion to the starved stomach and you will recover soon". Subbanna took the porridge from his hand but the next moment vomited it all spilling it over the ruler! Not minding it all, gently wiping it off from his dress, the ruler told me, "Call me if Subbu refuses to take the porridge". Such was his solicitude and kindly nature!

These are but specimens of kingly solicitude which this nation fostered with profound faith and care as an inalienable legacy. Perhaps those who doubt the episodes of Valmiki coming out with his maiden *sloka* when a hunter shot down the male krouncha bird while it was making love with its mate, of King Sibi parting with flesh from his thigh to save a dove, of Manu Niti Cholan offering the life of his son in lieu of the calf that was run over by the chariot of that prince, of Pandian Nedunchezhan dying instantaneously the minute he found that he had administered bad justice, of Bharata and Cheran Ilangovalan relinquishing the throne available to them and of many more such episodes this ancient *dharma bhumi*, this *punya bhumi* had presented, may review their stand in the light of the facts of recent occurrences narrated by Vasudevacharya. That our heritage is vast and *non parell* is admired by foreign eminence. Let us be worthy of it. □



SRI SHANMUKHANANDA NATIONAL EMINENCE AWARDS

It is through the medium of Fine Arts that we attain the closest approach to universality. It brings peace that is beyond the scope of normal human comprehension. Its immortal spirit ministers to our need for sweetness and light. From time immemorial, the Fine Arts have been patronised by Kings and Courts of wisdom. A few centuries ago, temples and Dewaswoms started honouring performing artistes to perpetuate all art forms in view of their sublimity and divinity. With the demise of these institutions as patrons of Fine Arts and with democracy gaining currency, the need for institutional recognition has arisen.



Semmangudi at the award function

As a premier institution of Fine Arts in South East Asia the activities of the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha extend far beyond providing a mere performing arena for the artistes. By harnessing talent, exposing it to discerning audiences and thus allowing the surfaced talent to blossom, the Sabha is performing

an important function. As an added measure, the Sabha has decided to provide a national framework for honouring veterans in this field as well as emerging stars. The Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award is a step in that direction. The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh, a citation, a silver lamp and a bronze Shanmukha icon.

Three subsidiary awards carrying the title 'Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani', are awarded each year. Along with the title, a cash prize of Rs. 25,000/-, a citation and a bronze Shanmukha icon are also awarded.

The inaugural award, during the Golden Jubilee Year of Shanmukhananda, was conferred on Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer (life time contribution) on Sunday the 22nd December, 2002. Born on 25th July 1908 in the village of Semmangudi in Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu, he learnt music from four distinguished masters, Semmangudi Narayanaswamy Iyer, Thiruvaidaimarudur Sakharama Rao, Umayalpuram Swaminatha Iyer and Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer. His first public performance was at the age of eighteen and from then he has never looked back. At the relatively young age of 39, he was conferred the title of 'Sangeetha Kalanidhi'. Since then he has received a host of awards which include the Padma Bhushan, and the Padma Vibhushan. At 94 today, he is the golden link between the past and the present.

The distinguished musicians who were chosen for the three Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani awards were Shri Sanjay Subramanyan, Smt. Shruthi Sadolika and Shri Niladri Kumar. Sanjay Subramanyan and Shruthi Sadolika received their awards on 22nd December. The award was conferred on Niladri Kumar during the Mumbai Music Festival on 26th January 2003, as he was unable to make it to the function held on the 22nd December.

Among the foremost of the younger generation of Indian classical musicians,



Shri Sanjay Subramanyan receiving the citation from President-Emeritus Dr. V. Subramanian

Sanjay is one of the most popular and sought after Carnatic vocal artistes. He was initially trained in vocal and violin by Shri. Laxminarayanan. He later trained under Smt. Rukmini Rajagopalan and Calcutta Shri. K.S. Krishnamurthy. He started his concert career in 1986 and has over the years performed in major centres both in India and abroad.

among the new generation of female vocal artistes. Born in 1951 and brought up in the musical ambience of the Jaipur-Atrani Gharana, Shruthi has been groomed by her father, Pandit Wamanrao Sadolika, a pupil of Ustad Alladiya Khan and his son Ustad Burji Khan. She has widened the scope of her inheritance by including in her repertoire semi-classical forms such as Thumri, Bhajan

Natya Sangeet and Ghazals. She is now in the process of tracing the roots of the



Smt. Shruthi Sadolika receiving the bronze Shanmukha icon from Shri V. Shankar and Dr. V. Subramanian



Shri Jayaram Mani presenting a memento to Shri Niladri Kumar.

Jaipur Gayaki.

first public performance at the age of six.

Niladri Kumar has been hailed as one of the most serious young exponents of Sitar representing the fifth generation of a distinguished family of Sitarists. His forefathers were prominent Sitarists of Dhaka. Nurtured and moulded under the guidance of his father, Pandit Kartick Kumar of the Senia Gharana, he started learning the Sitar at the tender age of four. He gave his

Niladri with his uncanny ability to strike an instant rapport with his audience, has sincerely attempted to infuse interest and respect for Indian classical music in the younger generation. His technical mastery over the Sitar is of a very high order. He is an orthodox amongst the traditional and most progressive among the creative.

- P. N. K.



AMRUTH MAHOTSAV OF PROF. T. N. KRISHNAN

The Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha and other cultural institutions in Mumbai joined hands to felicitate Prof. T. N. Krishnan on his attaining the age of seventy five (Amruth Mahotsav).

on the Ghatam. Although the concert was relatively brief, it reached fine heights and proved that Krishnan had effectively communicated all the fine points of his distinctive style to his children.



President Shri V. Shankar felicitating Shri Krishnan

The function was organized by the Sabha at the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Auditorium on Sunday the 8th December, 2002. A very large number of organizations participated in offering their respect and regards for this great artiste. The felicitation function was followed by a violin recital by Krishnan, who was accompanied on two violins by his daughter Vijaya Lakshmi and his son Sriram. The percussion support for the concert was provided by Thiruvarur Bhakthavatsalam on the Mridangam and Vaikom Gopalakrishnan

Starting his concert career at the tender age of eight, Krishnan reached the pinnacle of fame pretty soon and since then, for the past six decades or so, he has remained at the peak of his profession. During this period, he has accompanied all the great names in Carnatic music, besides establishing himself as a top grade solo artiste. The outstanding feature of his greatness as a violinist is his immaculate bowing technique. 'Shanmukha' wishes his many admirers many more years of listening pleasure from this great artiste.

- P.N.K.

OBITUARY

PATTABHIRAMAN

'Sruti' Founder-Editor passes away

In the untimely passing away of drawing form of presentation. In addition to being Founder-Editor of Dr. N. Pattabhiraman, Founder-Editor of 'Sruti', the English language monthly devoted to Indian music and dance, the Indian music world and in particular the Carnatic music world, has lost one of its most eminent well-wishers and promoters. 'Sruti' was started in the year 1983 with the avowed intention of

to preserve the hoary traditions of Indian music and dance while at the same



Shri S. Seshadri (Founder & Trustee of Sri Shanmukhananda Sabha) honouring Shri Pattabhiraman

documenting Indian music and time encouraging innovation along musicians, dancers and gurus with great healthy and desirable lines. In emphasis on authenticity without loss addition, he was the Director of the of detail, objectivity and an attention Special Projects Division of the

'Sruti Foundation' where he organized studies, documentation projects and seminars covering the multifarious facets of Indian music and dance. He conceptualized the Subbulakshmi-Sadasivam Music and Dance Resources Institute [SAMUDRI] which was launched as a wing of 'Sruti Foundation' in 1999. He was the first Director-General of this Institute. It would be interesting to note that Pattabhiraman held two Master's degrees in Economics from Chennai and a Doctorate in the same field from an

American University. He lived in the US for nearly twenty-five years and served there in various capacities. He was a Government of India official, an economic and business consultant, a public relations executive and an international civil servant at the United Nations. He returned to India in 1980. Not surprisingly, he was the recipient of a number of awards and honours. In respect of his widespread and varied contributions to Indian music and dance, he has had very few equals. □

Padacchedam : Paramacharya Clarifies :

"Many musicians, who concentrate more on music than on the meaning distort the meaning and message of songs. The correct meaning of the line *Guruguhāyagnāna dhvānta savitrē* in *Sri Subramanyaya Namasthē (Kambhoji)* can be got only by breaking up the line as *Guruguhaya agnāna dhvānta savitrē* which means, 'Obeisance to Guruguha, the Sun who dispels the darkness of ignorance'. Some sing this line lengthening the *Guruguhaayaa* giving the impression that it is a separate word and the rest of the line sounds like '*gnāna dhvānta savitre*' which gives the distorted meaning 'the Sun dispelling the darkness of wisdom'!

Similarly in *Sankarachāryam (Sankarābharanam)*, there is a line *Paramādvaita sthapana leelam*, meaning 'He who founded the profound philosophy of Advaita as an act of play'. But some who either do not understand or care, elongate the word '*Paramaa*' and sing the second word to sound as if Dvaita is established as an act of play and thus convert the Advaita Acharya into a Dvaita Acharya".

(Courtesy: "Yet Another Garland"
by Shri N. Rajagopalan)

A TRIBUTE

NATYACHARYA NONPAREIL



Guru T. K. Mahalingam Pillai

The year 2002, despite registering many a progress in the field of fine arts, was witness to a certain vacuum due to the demise of stalwarts who upheld tradition and values of classical arts and carved a niche for themselves in the performing forum - Sangita Kalanidhis Shri K. V. Narayanaswamy and Smt. Mani Krishnaswamy, Kanjira virtuosi Shri V. Nagarajan and Shri Harishankar and the nonegenarian legend of the Mysore School of Bharata Natyam Dr. Venkatalakshamma, known for her inimitable Abhinaya, to name a few. And with the demise of octogenarian Natyacharya Guru T. K. Mahalingam Pillai of Shri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, in early December, an era of Bharata Natya Sampradaya of the Tanjavur style came to an end.

No exaggeration it is that the vacuum causes concern. All these veterans had been heirs to a centuries-old legacy that enriched the performing art and their scions and 'successors', though soundly trained have to grapple against the tempting modern trends

in order to keep alive and aloft what they have inherited.

Guru Mahalingam Pillai was a heir to a Sampradaya evolved and nurtured over centuries and generations by his forefathers. And he shared the unique privilege with his father Bharata Vidwan T. P. Kuppiyah Pillai, brother-in-law Guru A. T. Govindaraj Pillai and sister Smt. Karunambal of establishing and conducting the landmark institution "Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir" in this metropolis and then carrying it to its golden glory. The contribution of the younger members of the family, especially his younger brother Kalaimamani Guru K. Kalyanasundaram, himself a 'trail-blazer' is, no less significant. Nevertheless, Natyacharya Mahalingam Pillai stands in a class apart for reasons more than one.

He was born literally with "Cymbals in hand and Solkattus in tongue"; for, the environs at home were surcharged with Tattukkazhi Nadam and melodious renderings. He was initiated into Nattuvangam even as a tiny tot and put to the grind of learning music and languages under stalwarts like Sakharama Rao, Kuppiar and Mahalingayyar. At seven he was at the Service (Sevai) at Konkaneeswarar Temple, Tanjavur and when he was hardly 15, he conducted an Arangetram and earned a Sabhash 'Bharata Singham' from the titan of the times Pandanallur Meenakshisundaram Pillai.

Little wonder that Mahalingam Pillai grew to be a staunch purist - traditionalist. But he was not antagonistic or averse towards trends and innovations which had certain perception and added a healthy dimension to the art. In fact, he himself had brought new facets in choreography moving with the times and environs when the Rajarajeswari school was established. He choreographed verses of Kamba Ramayanam in the format of Sabdam; added kritis of the Trinity of Music with

substantial potential for visualisation to his repertoire; presented an entire Margam comprising Purandara Dasa's Devarnamas, Maharaja Swati Tirunal's multi-lingual forms of compositions, Veena Seshanna's compositions, poems and keertanas of Subramania Bharati in a commemorative package, not to speak of the fabulous keertanas of the Tamil Trinity - Muthu Tandavar, Marimutha Pillai and Arunachala Kavirayar; those of Gopalakrishna Bharati, Papanasam Sivan and other Padakaaras.

In addition, his choreography of Bhajans and compositions in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, etc., helped non-South Indian students learn and dance the exacting art of Bharata Natyam with ease. This considerably helped the institution spread its wings far and wide among art enthusiasts, and even abroad. All these took form without compromising on the tenets of tradition. Any gimmicks with populist appeal or applause-oriented dramatisation did not form part of his approach. A disciplinarian to the core, Mahalingam Pillai taught his students not only 'Natyam' but also the values of life, culture, reticence and reverence - all through his action and living pattern.

A stickler for punctuality, his mode of instilling the same in his students was very simple. No chiding, no reprimands to late-comers. His morning routine including the rounds of temple over, Sir would, at the stroke of 8 o'clock, start the invocation followed by Alarippu, be there any students or just an empty class-room. This was enough for the late-comers to correct themselves from the next session. Never would he brook delay in any programme organised by him, whatever be the reason. The programme would start strictly at the scheduled time. Those behind the scene, had gone through some nightmarish moments for reasons beyond their control. And when such a great master rose to greet visitors and do pranams to elders could the students lag behind?

Teaching was his passion while choreographing his life-breath. In his training and encouraging the talented students on the

three 'R's of the artform, he had few equals. Such a large-hearted Guru, he never hesitated to inspire a talented dancer to wield the "Tattukkazhi" in a surprise command, but also initiated her/him into the nuances of Nattuvangam. No special lessons. One took off on his command in the class. Any hesitation or shyness, the student lost the opportunity for ever.

As for choreography, he continued his efforts in this direction until his last breath. Only a couple of days before he died, recalled his sister Karunambal in an emotion choked voice, when his senses and system were almost low, he told his kith and son around him how a particular Javali should be sung and enunciated. Anything extra would be uncalled for. As for Abhinaya, especially Mukhabhinaya, (facial expressions), he was unsurpassed.

It was a great experience watching the 'Sir' doing Abhinaya at the Krishna Gana Sabha Natyakala (December) Conference, at Shanmukhananda Hall's Silver Jubilee Dance Symposium and at Sruti Foundation Dance Research Seminar.

The great master was inquisitive even as a child artiste and a no-nonsense Guru regarding innovation for innovation's sake. Even as an eight-year old he was intrigued with the Nagaswaram Concert being called "Peria Melam" and the 'Sadir' Cutcheri being dubbed as "Chinna Melam". These were featured regularly in temple festivals, like Brahmotsavam etc.

To quote the Natyacharya:

"Was it because of the size and tone of the instruments played? But why 'Chinna Melam' for dance where the Devadasi was the prime performer? It was not until 1948 that some light was thrown on it at the Natyakala Conference convened by connoisseur-Advocate Sarangapani at Museum Theatre, Egmore, Madras where all the Nattuvanars and Vidwans participated discussing ... on the perspective and prospects of propagating the art of Bharata Natyam ... A probable solution was found in Vazhuvoor Ramaiah Pillai's explanation when he said that since 'Natyam' is a 'Deivika Chinnam', a divine symbol, and offered as a divine 'Arpanam', the 'Deivika Chinna Melam' might have in course

of time come to be called 'Chinna Melam'. This explanation appeared more plausible to Vasudeva Sastri, a renowned Scholar-archivist of Tanjore Saraswati Mahal. E. Krishna Iyer, the crusader for dance renaissance, endorsed it and the rest accepted it".

Another thing that irked him was Tiruppugazh being rendered for Alarippu. Why should a pure Nritta number, an opening Arpanam be interwoven with lyrics and that too with a number that figures at the conclusion of a music concert, he used to question.

The Natyacharya was recipient of quite some honours, such as Kalaimamani, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Sruti Foundation's E. Krishna Iyer Award, the Gaurav Puraskar of the Maharashtra Government, "Bharatha Singham" by Tamil Sangham of Michigan, USA. The last two

awards, he said, had special significance to him. While the "Gaurav Puraskar" registered the continuity of appreciation the Maharashtrians had for his Parampara (his forefathers were honoured by the Maratha rulers of Tanjavur, while he received the Puraskar of Maharashtra Govt.), the latter doubly justified the 'Sabhash' of the Pandanallur Thatha expressed in 1942.

His students continue to spread his message in India and abroad. His son Vishwanath and nephew Vasanth Kumar are already full-fledged dance teachers and their Nattuvangam have a melodic ring too. One prays that they take a tradition he nurtured to greater heights with the same reverence under the guidance and blessings of Guru Kalyanasundaram and Smt. Karunambal. □

- **Sulochana Rajendran**

That wretch, Narada !

Lord Krishna noticed the ego of Arjuna in possessing unparalleled love and devotion to Him and took him out to disabuse his mind of it. A brahmana was seen eating dry grass with a sword dangling on his side. Arjuna understood that he ate dry grass to avoid injury to live grass. But how could it accord with the violent weapon tied to his belt?

Asked to clarify, the brahmana replied that it was to punish four persons. 'The first is that wretch, Narada. Look at the audacity of that fellow. He is perpetually feeding the Lord with his music day and night, in-season and out of season. He disturbs the peace of the Lord without any consideration for his comfort!....' He listed Prahlada, Draupadi and Arjuna as the other three.

Arjuna felt the depth of the brahmana's selfless devotion and his ego evaporated.

- **Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa**

(Courtesy: "Yet Another Garland"
by Shri N. Rajagopalan)

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